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[FIVE PICE

A CHALLENGE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

I have before me three letters rebuking me for not going to Sindh to face the Hurs personally. Two are friendly. The third comes from a critic who has no faith in non-violence. His letter demands an answer. Its main part runs as follows:

"I am deeply interested in your writings and in the effect that they make upon the minds of the ignorant masses and your blind followers. I would therefore feel obliged if you enlighten me on the following points, especially because points nos. 3 & 4 raise novel and fundamental issues about non-violence.

"You have been training a number of satyagrahis in your Ashram and they must have had the advantage of your supervision and instructions. You have been proclaiming that violence could be effectively met by non-violent means. Japan is now attacking India in the East and Hurs are creating trouble in the West. Is this not then the long-awaited opportunity when you can practise what you have so long preached?

"Instead of doing that, you are contenting yourself by writing articles in the *Harijan*. Imagine Hitler or Stalin, without sending their armies to the front line, writing such articles in *Pravda* or such other paper. Instead of asking the Sindh M. L. A. s. to resign and go to the Hurs, why should you not send a 'company' of your trained satyagrahis and try the luck of your doctrine ?

"Is it not the duty and business of a satyagrahi to go and meet the danger where it exists and threatens the country? Or is it your case that your satyagrahis will meet it only when it reaches the Ashram and not before? If so, is not your doctrine a doctrine of inaction?"

I have no doubt that if I could have gone to Sindh, I might have been able to do something. I have done such things before, not without success. But I am too old for such missions. What little energy I have, I am storing up for what promises to be the last fight of my life.

I have not conceived my mission to be that of a knight-errant wandering everywhere to deliver people from difficult situations. My humble occupation has been to show people how they can solve their own difficulties. So far as Sindh is concerned, I maintain that my advice was perfect. It was clearly Congressmen's duty to proceed to the infested areas and spend themselves in the effort to convert the Hurs to the way of peace. Indeed they could have used arms if they had no faith in non-violence. They should have resigned from the Congress to free themselves from the obligation to observe non-violence. If we are to be fit for independence, we have to learn the art of self-

defence either non-violently or violently. Every citizen should consider himself liable to render help to his neighbour in distress.

If I had adopted the role my critic has suggested, I would have helped people to become parasites. Therefore it is well that I have not trained myself to defend others. I shall be satisfied if at my death it could be said of me that I had devoted the best part of my life to showing the way to become self-reliant and cultivate the capacity to defend oneself under every conceivable circumstance.

My correspondent has committed the grave error of thinking that my mission is to deliver people from calamities. That is an arrogation only claimed by dictators. But no dictator has ever succeeded in proving the claim.

Indeed if I could say, as the correspondent thinks I could, that if the menaces of the kind described by him face the Ashram, it will give a good account of itself, I should be quite content and feel that my mission was wholly successful. But I can lay no such claim. The Ashram at Sevagram is only so-called. The visitors gave it the name and it has passed current. The Ashram is a medley of people come together for different purposes. There are hardly half a dozen permanent residents having a common ideal. How these few will discharge themselves when the test comes remains to be seen.

The fact is that non-violence does not work in the same way as violence. It works in the opposite way. An armed man naturally relies upon his arms. A man who is intentionally unarmed relies upon the unseen force called God by poets, but called the unknown by scientists. But that which is unknown is not necessarily non-existent. God is the Force among all forces known and unknown. Non-violence without reliance upon that Force is poor stuff to be thrown in the dust.

I hope now my critic realises the error underlying his question and that he sees also that the doctrine that has guided my life is not one of inaction but of the highest action. His question should really have been put thus:

How is it that, in spite of your work in India for over 22 years, there are not sufficient satyagrahis who can cope with external and internal menaces? My answer then would be that twentytwo years are nothing in the training of a nation for the development of non-violent strength. That is not to say that a large number of persons will not show that strength on due occasion. That occasion seems to have come now. This war puts the civilian on his mettle no less than the military man, non-violent no less than the violent.

Sevagram, 18-6-42

THE PRESSURE OF LOVE

I extract the following from a correspondent's Gujarati letter :

"Our little village was the scene of an event last week. Two of the leading men in our village were drink-addicts. Their sons who are reformers could not bear this. The fathers would not listen to the sons' entreaties. So the sons went on a fast refusing to have any food until the fathers promised to give up drink. This created a stir in the village. After a day of the fast the fathers promised privately before a few friends to give up drink. The sons refused to accept this promise as satisfactory, and insisted on a pledge being taken before a public meeting of the villagers. After two days the fathers relented and agreed to pledge themselves publicly never to touch drink. Shri Gordandas Chokhawala who was here was invited to preside over the public meeting held for the purpose, and the sons thereafter broke the fast.

"This is all very well. But I do not know if the sons were right in coercing their fathers. Is not this coercion violence? My own father is a drink-addict. I have tried hard and long to wean him from the habit, but in vain. But these my cousins have succeeded and their action has had a great effect in the village and its neighbourhood. May I follow in their footsteps? I was not sure of the ethical correctness of the course, otherwise I too should have joined them. But your word would be enough for me. I would request you to deal with this letter in *Harijanbandhu*, so that your advice may be acted upon by young men like me."

I am sure there was no coercion involved in the step taken by the young men, and I am equally sure that it has Gandhiji's blessings and he would commend it to all young people who have the misfortune to have their nearest and dearest ones in the grip of a vice. Satyagraha in the domestic field is a well-tried and unexceptionable remedy. There are a few obvious conditions. The shortcoming it is aimed against must be an intolerable vice amounting to a disgrace and working the physical and moral ruin of the addict. Then there should be an indissoluble bond of affection between the parties. It is the right of service and affection that entitles the children and wards to exercise this moral pressure on their parents or guardians. The other condition is that they should have exhausted all other remedies which include repeated requests and entreaties, more devoted service, and giving the dear ones visible demonstration of one's mental pain by giving up one's favourite dishes or one meal, and so on, briefly anything short of a complete fast. Non-cooperation of a sort can also be applied. I have known a sister who non-cooperated with her husband and patiently suffered the consequences thereof for a number of years in order to wean him from vice, and the husband was completely won over as a result of her suffering. If even after all possible gentle measures have been employed the parents or guardians or other dear ones persist, fasting may be legitimately resorted to. There should be no anger and no resentment, there should be

utmost love. The dear ones should be made to feel that their persistence in the vice gives the relatives deep pain so much so that it becomes impossible for them to eat and drink and carry on as usual until the unpleasant thing that divides them is removed. The greater their earnestness and affection the quicker and more abiding will be the result. Let me tell the correspondent that this form of Satyagraha has, to my knowledge, been successfully used not only by children against their parents, but by parents against children, by husbands against wives and *vice versa*. Being the purest type of weapon it can be used by all those who are fired with love, who have no axe to grind, and only the highest end to serve.

The young men in question were right in insisting on the pledge being taken in public. There is shame in persisting in vice, no shame in owning it up and declaring it from the housetops that one is free from it. This public avowal gives one a measure of moral strength and is sufficient protection against a temptation to break the pledge.

Sevagram, 22-6-42

M. D.

CASUAL NOTES

"Extraordinary Blindness"

Lin Yutang, the distinguished Chinese author who has made his mark in the domain of English letters, is the last person to be charged with pro-Japanese sympathies or with a defeatist mentality. He has written an article in the 25th anniversary issue of *Asia* on the necessity of a Union Now (of China) with India as a counterblast to Clarence Streit's cry of "Union Now" (of U. S. A.) with Britain. We are not now concerned with the idea of an Asiatic Federation — not at any rate so long as the principal Asiatic nation - Japan - is out for totalitarian fascism. But some of the home-truths he has uttered must be laid to heart by every Britisher. He deplores that "both the United States and Great Britain have not changed in their attitude to Asia", and he is therefore worried not so much about the outcome of the war as about the outcome of the peace. He refers to what he calls "the extraordinary blindness of the British Government with regard to Asia", "shown not so much by the inadequate defence of Singapore as by the complacency with which that inadequacy is excused, and apparently accepted." Malay and Singapore were lost, he says on the authority of British Cabinet Ministers, not due to "neglect" but to "deliberate choice". And yet, says Lin Yutang, both the United States and Great Britain "expect to go on colonizing every Asiatic when the war is over." "What is happening," he asks, "inside the minds of the Malays and the Indians and the Burmese and the Chinese? Are the white Imperialists going to stage a comeback?"

The inference to be drawn from these apparently contradictory statements is that neither America nor Britain can afford to lose these "colonies", and it is part of their strategy to lose them now in order to win them back as "colonies", rather than to win an honourable victory by freeing these and letting them fight as equal Allies.

"Democracy today has its chance," he concludes warning them, "and democracy may forfeit it. The Atlantic Charter has been promised to all countries subjected by Hitler. The Atlantic Charter must be equally promised to all countries subjected by England, or we shall run into another and greater world catastrophe."

One vital correction is needed in this warning. The Atlantic Charter must not be *promised*—Germany and Japan also can make and are making big promises—but it must be *applied now* at this very moment, if the Allies are to have a moral victory which alone counts and which alone can ensure a stable peace.

Stop the Traditional Game

A writer in the *New Statesman and Nation* sounds a similar warning and refers pointedly to the expectation of "traditional England" "that at the end of this war, with the aid of the Chinese, American, and Dutch, it is going to recover its traditional Empire in which everything will go on as before." "Our reverses in Malay and Burma mean not merely that on the spot we were ill-prepared and ill-led: they mean that by our own faults of racial arrogance and aloofness our leadership over these peoples has passed from us. 'We may, if we have the grace to mend our ways, become in the future their allies, friends and helpers, but only on condition that we abandon our traditional claim to rule over them.' The mention of Dominion Status serves, he says, but as "an irritant and a symbol of insincerity." "In the past all our offers were qualified by reservations which in effect enabled and even invited the minorities to put their veto on any advance. What Indians chiefly mean by 'independence' is that we should cease to play this traditional game of divide to rule." Alas, the writer did not know then that even before the ink on his paper was dry the British were preparing to play the last (one hopes it was the last) move in that game, viz., the Cripps' proposals. It is therefore that Gandhiji would have no more offer from them, neither the promise of Independence nor any schemes for India's "future Freedom," as they love to describe it, but only an orderly withdrawal leaving us alone to do what we like with ourselves.

Another Game

A Chinese resident in Britain gives through the columns of the same weekly a warning against another game that the British are playing, little knowing that Japan has all along profited by it. "Each time when a city in the Far East is evacuated, the population is invariably divided between the Europeans (which illogically includes the Americans) on the one hand, and the 'coloured people' (with 'natives' and 'Asiatics' as alternatives) on the other. Behind this rough classification I fear that there is still the old white men's consciousness lurking. It is unpleasant but true to say that the Japanese propagandists have exploited this time-worn generalisation with some success."

"Are there," he asks, "any colourless people on earth except those standing in Madame Tussaud's?

Of all colours, nothing frightens me more than wax! Be one's face a Devon apple, a half-ripen tomato, or a brownish dumpling, there is always so much more life." He recognises what Britain is doing for China, and says, "with such a rosy picture in mind, I venture to suggest that we should uproot the colour-bias."

That, I should think, is an extraordinarily mildly worded warning. The stark fact, as we have known it to our cost, is that the bias is there not only in outward verbal expression but corrupts their daily life—even their behaviour in organising to win this war! The war, they should know, cannot be won, except "ye be converted" and "born again".

Sevagram, 18-6-42

M. D.

Notes

Independence Ensures Speedy Victory

Asked by the Reuter's London representative to amplify his statement about the possibility of Free India entering into a treaty with the United Nations, Gandhiji said:

"There can be no limit to what friendly Independent India can do. I had in mind a treaty between United Nations and India for defence of China against Japanese aggression. But given mutual goodwill and trust, the treaty should cover protection of human dignity and rights by means other than resort to armament. For this involves competition in capacity for greatest slaughter. I wish British opinion could realise that Independence of India changes character of Allied cause and ensures speedier victory."

Deliberate Distortion

Replying to the criticism of the *London Times* on his latest proposal Gandhiji said: "Every time nationalists have suggested solutions however sound intrinsically there has been distortion of their speeches and writings, followed later by persecution. My latest proposal conceived in the friendliest spirit and in my opinion intrinsically sound has already begun to be distorted. I regard my proposal as fool-proof. The operations of the Allied forces against Japanese aggression have been left intact under my proposal which amounts to this that Britain should become true to her declaration, withdraw from India as conqueror and therefore controller of her destiny, and leave India to shape her own destiny without the slightest interference. This, as I can see, puts her case on a moral basis and gives her in India a great ally not in the cause of Imperialism but in the cause of human freedom. If there is anarchy in India, Britain alone will be responsible, not I. What I have said is that I would prefer anarchy to the present slavery and consequent impotence of India. Any person, however great he may be, who distorts the proposals I have made will be condemned by history as an enemy of the Allied cause. Sir Stafford Cripps' proposals have been weighed by India and after great deliberation rejected by all parties. It is an insult to India to repeat those proposals as the final word of British statesmanship."

Sevagram, 21-5-42

HARIJAN

June 28

1942

A POSER

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A correspondent writes to Mahadev Desai :

"Referring to Gandhiji's demand for an orderly withdrawal of the British from India or for a complete and immediate ending of the British rule in this country, some friends here want to clearly understand the implications of the suggestion that on free India becoming an ally of the United Nations, British and American troops may remain on Indian soil and operate from her under a treaty with free India, because defence of India will be then our 'common cause'. Theoretically from the standpoint of India's independence the position is no doubt quite clear. But some questions arise as to its practical implications. It is of course understood that Gandhiji here is not stating his personal non-violent position but is visualising one of the possibilities, namely, that of a free nationalist India going in for a policy of armed resistance or of collaboration of some kind with foreign troops in armed resistance, to aggression. But what about the British position? A cordial acceptance of Gandhiji's demand by the British will not only completely change the moral basis of the war but will in fact negative, for them, its political and economic *sine-quanon*. If the British are not driven out of India by force of circumstances, but they give up their hold on India as a voluntary repayment of a debt long overdue, this moral act cannot, by its very nature, be an isolated one, but should fundamentally affect Britain's relations with her other Asiatic and African possessions also. If Britain is forced to leave India to God or to the Japanese she will go on fighting to save her other possessions in Asia and Africa and to regain those already lost; but if she voluntarily dispossesses herself of her ill-gotten properties, her material reasons for prosecuting the war will practically vanish. From the economic point of view, Britain could never inflict upon herself this terrible costly war if she did not hope afterwards to reimburse herself somehow out of the possessions she was fighting to retain. It will be absolutely beyond the resources of Britain, divested of her foreign possessions, to carry on the war on anything like its present scale. To try to do that would be a most senseless and inhuman infliction on the British people themselves."

"As regards ideal reasons, these have no substance now, because so long as Britain is holding millions upon millions of human beings in subjugation she has no right to speak for democracy, etc. But the ideal reasons will gain substantiality on Britain responding to Gandhiji's appeal. And then it is true Britain may look forward to the sympathy and co-operation of the peoples she will have freed and may to some extent rely on their resources too. But just here we are brought face to face with the old question of means and ends, namely, whether war can be a proper and

effective instrument of policy for the attainment of the democratic ends of justice and human freedom. It would be a disaster if anything were said or done that would give rise to a misunderstanding on this issue so as to jeopardise or prejudice the historic lead which Gandhiji has given in this matter to the world at this unprecedented crisis in human affairs. On no account can that moral world-leadership be endangered. Why does not Gandhiji persist in the line which he enunciated sometime ago, namely, that the voluntary abdication of the British power in respect of her imperial possessions is sure to bring about a moral situation in the world that will baffle Hitler and Mussolini and their war machines? The voluntary liquidation of British Imperialism in India, if it comes about, will be a tremendous act of non-violence on the part of the British. When we are visualising its effect, why should we not think in terms of non-violence also? If the tree is non-violence the fruit also should be non-violence.

"There are so many side issues arising from the question of allowing foreign troops on Indian soil. Foreign troops cannot at all function in this part of the world without India being made a vast arsenal and supply-base for the United Nations. Any suggestion, however tentative and hypothetical, in this direction is fraught with danger.

"While Gandhiji is desperately anxious to prove his bona fides as to his determination to keep the Japanese out, his utterances regarding the future position of foreign troops in India are likely to be misunderstood by the other party who may be already seeking an opening for bargaining. Not that negotiations as such are objectionable, but if the other party's approach is vitiated by the spirit of bargaining, that will not only detract from the value of the British action, if any, but will also introduce unwanted complications on the Indian side. The effect on the mind of the Indian masses has also to be taken into consideration. At this stage of the new movement it is most essential to attune the public mind to the thought and conviction that India must get ready to fall back exclusively upon her own resources, moral and material. Can we at this psychological moment emphasise a possibility which will suggest to the man in the street that 'after all they will be here'? The mind of the man in the street will hardly be able to juxtapose national freedom and the presence of thousands and thousands of foreign troops in the country."

This letter demands an answer. The difficulty about the confusion in the public mind by the contemplated stay of the Allied troops in the country is very real. Neither the masses nor even the classes will appreciate the necessity of the military operations of the Allied powers after the declaration of withdrawal. But if the necessity is proved, the public may be expected to reconcile themselves to the inevitable.

There was obviously a gap in my first writing. I filled it in as soon as it was discovered by one of my numerous interviewers. Non-violence demands the strictest honesty, cost what it may. The public have therefore to suffer my weakness, if weakness it may be called. I could not be guilty of asking

the Allies to take a step which would involve certain defeat. I could not guarantee fool-proof non-violent action to keep the Japanese at bay. Abrupt withdrawal of the Allied troops might result in Japan's occupation of India and China's sure fall. I had not the remotest idea of any such catastrophe resulting from my action. Therefore I feel that if in spite of the acceptance of my proposal, it is deemed necessary by the Allies to remain in India to prevent Japanese occupation, they should do so, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by the national government that may be set up after the British withdrawal.

The writer's argument about Britain having no cause left for pursuing the war, if she accepts my proposal and logically follows it in Africa, is sound. But that is the acid test proposed. India has every right to examine the implications of high-sounding declarations about justice, preservation of democracy and freedom of speech and individual liberty. If a band of robbers have among themselves a democratic constitution in order to enable them to carry on their robbing operations more effectively, they do not deserve to be called a democracy. Is India a democracy? Are the States a democracy? Britain does not deserve to win the war on the ground of justice if she is fighting to keep her Asiatic and African possessions. I am not unaware of the tremendous change in Britain's economic policy that the acceptance of my proposal involves. But that change is a vital necessity, if this war is to have a satisfactory ending.

Who knows if Britain's acceptance of my proposal will not by itself mean an honourable end of the war resulting in a change even in the mentality of the Axis powers?

The writer is afraid that my reconciliation to the presence of the British troops would mean a descent on my part from my non-violent position. I hold that my non-violence dictates a recognition of the vital necessity. Neither Britain nor America share my faith in non-violence. I am unable to state that the non-violent effort will make India proof against Japanese or any other aggression. I am not able even to claim that the whole of India is non-violent in the sense required. In the circumstances it would be hypocritical on my part to insist on the immediate withdrawal of the Allied troops as an indispensable part of my proposal. It is sufficient for me to declare that so far as India is concerned, she does not need troops to defend herself, having no quarrel with Japan. But India must not by any act of hers short of national suicide let China down or put the Allied powers in jeopardy. So long therefore as India lacks faith in the capacity of non-violence to protect her against aggression from without, the demand for the withdrawal of the Allied troops during the pendency of the war would itself be an act of violence, if the controllers of the troops hold it to be necessary for their defence to keep them in India for that purpose and that alone.

Sevagram, 22-6-42

TWO ACTIONS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

My proposal for the withdrawal of the British power involves two actions. One is to deal with the present emergency, and the other to secure freedom from British supremacy. The second admits of delay. There is a lot of confusion about its implications. I am trying to the best of my ability to deal with the questions as they arise from time to time.

The first admits of no delay and demands specific action irrespective of the proposal for British withdrawal. This is in connection with (1) the behaviour of troops, (2) the impending salt famine, (3) control of food grains, (4) evacuation for the sake of the military, (5) discrimination between Europeans and Anglo-Indians and Anglo-Burmans on the one hand and Indians on the other.

On the first item the people have the law and public opinion wholly on their side. The Government machinery is always slow to move, more so now, when it is all pre-mortgaged for military preparations. People must everywhere learn to defend themselves against misbehaving individuals, no matter who they are. The question of non-violence and violence does not arise. No doubt the non-violent way is always the best, but where that does not come naturally the violent way is both necessary and honourable. Inaction here is rank cowardice and unmanly. It must be shunned at all cost. Pandit Nehru told me that at the stations in the north, platform hawkers have banded themselves for self-defence, so the troops are careful at those stations.

As to salt famine, the law is not quite on the people's side but right is wholly on their side. I am hoping that the Government will put the widest construction on the clause referring to salt in Gandhi-Irwin pact and allow people to manufacture salt wherever they can. And I would advise them to manufacture salt even at the risk of prosecution. Necessity knows no law. A starving man will help himself to food wherever he finds it. Rishi Vishwamitra did so.

Number three is difficult to deal with. But the same rule applies as to the second. Food cannot be manufactured as easily as salt. It is up to the merchants to band themselves to do what they can and force the hands of the Government to do the right thing by suggesting wise rules for the supply of food to the poor people at fixed prices. If this is not done in time looting shops is sure to be a daily event.

As to four, I have no doubt that the authorities may not ask people to vacate except where they are ready to offer equivalent land and buildings and cart the people and their belongings to the places prepared for them and pay them a living wage till they find suitable occupation. The people, if they have nowhere to move to, should simply refuse to vacate and suffer the consequences.

As to the fifth, the people should refuse to submit to discrimination and it will break down. Most of these difficulties take place because we have cultivated the habit of submitting to them. In the words of the late Lord Willingdon, we must learn resolutely to say 'no', when that is the real answer possible and take the consequence. Sevagram, 22-6-42

"THE COMMUNAL TRIANGLE"*

The Communal Triangle in India is the pregnant title of a book on our communal problem by two of our distinguished socialists. It is a remarkable contribution to the study of a problem which has baffled our best leaders, and though the book has been published over the authorship of two, it is acknowledged to be the result of the joint labours of several socialist friends whose harmonious collaboration in jail has borne such rich fruit. Study of our social, economic and political problems has become a rare virtue in these days, what with the preoccupations of the struggle for our freedom and what with our lack of emphasis on patient and tireless study of facts and figures which used to be the forte of our stalwarts like Dadabhai and Wacha, Gokhale and Joshi. The charge that our labours since 1920 have lacked study is well-founded. This book into the making of which have gone infinite cooperative labour, study and research, will be a considerable answer to that charge. Every possible source of information has been tapped, important literature on the subject, not only in English and other foreign languages, but in Hindustani, Persian and Marathi has been utilised, and the result is history which, as Buchan has said, is not only a science but an art, "a synthesis rather than a compilation, an interpretation as well as a chronicle".

The book has, as I have said, a pregnant title. The phrase 'the eternal triangle' is well-known, and the havoc that the third party works in the life of a married couple is incalculable. Often the disaster is irretrievable, unless the two who have plighted their troth to each other recover their senses and eliminate the third, or the third repents and eliminates himself or herself. The third side which the authors have rightly described as the base of our communal triangle has played the disastrous part of the third party in 'the eternal triangle', and the conclusion is irresistible that as soon as the base is eliminated there will be no basis left for the perpetual troubles between the two, who for good or ill plighted their troth to each other centuries ago. Gandhiji, temperamentally accustomed to looking for the cause of our ills in ourselves rather than outside, made his best endeavour to rivet the attention of his countrymen for over a quarter century on our own failings and shortcomings and on our duty. But failure of his intensive prayerful effort has now driven him to the conclusion that unless the *fons et origo mali* is removed, the disease cannot be eradicated. It is not with a light heart that he came to that painful conclusion. The last straw on the camel's back was the Cripps' proposals constituting the climax of the diabolical process of *divide et impera*, and he returned from Delhi with the decision made up in his own mind that there was no salvation for this stricken land without a withdrawal of its imperialist masters. The authors of the book have traced the history of the operation of this disastrous policy ever since the British gained their foothold in India, with such wealth of detail,

such masterly analysis, and such accuracy that any dispassionate reader, Hindu or Muslim, should come to the same conclusion that they have arrived. It is remarkable that the book was given to the press before the climax of the Cripps' proposals came upon us, and months before Gandhiji raised his life-giving slogan asking the British to withdraw; but the conclusion they have arrived at is absolutely identical. "It is for this reason," they say at the end of a revealing description of the 'the British arm of the Triangle', "that the Congress has always thrown out the challenge that the first condition for a speedy settlement of the Hindu Muslim differences is that the third party of the triangle should withdraw unconditionally and give the two parties an honest chance to face each other's fears and demands." Again : "the fact is that whatever form of government or constitutional arrangements we want in this country, if they are to be based on the people's consent, then we can never get them as long as the British are masters in our house." Exposing the mischievous conclusions of a book by Sir George Schuster and Mr. Guy Wint, the latest genealogical descendants of the "Empire-builders", the authors say: "If as Guy Wint suggests, the Congress is not a homogeneous organisation but a body of miscellaneous opinion held together by their common opposition to the British Raj then, as soon as that opposition is over and India becomes free, the Congress will fall to pieces and the various groups in it may seek fresh party alignments and party labels. When that happens, the Congress will no longer be there to impose its totalitarian will upon the Indian people, and the stage will be clear for sober statesmen to try all the constitutional experiments they want in a spirit of sweet reasonableness." But the primary inexorable condition for that happy consummation is the British withdrawal. They came as birds of passage and remained as birds of prey, "and the marks of their ravages have sunk deep into the face of this unfortunate land". The Muslims stayed not to exploit but to make the country their motherland and helped in producing a culture which is our "richest treasure". The only expiation for the "Great Refusal" of the British to settle in India is now to withdraw in dignity.

The authors have used the language of sociology and discussed in separate chapters the political, the sociological and the "irrational factors" of the communal problem, but it will be found that the three are but the branches of the same poison-tree, and the facts therefore of one chapter run into those of the other chapters. Thus the development of Muslim politics which has been treated in a separate chapter is bound up with the working of the "British arm of the Triangle" which has a chapter for itself, and it is again intimately connected with the sociological aspect of the problem to which a valuable chapter has been devoted. The same poison runs through all the aspects, for the simple reason that it is administered by the consummate masters of the art of divide and rule.

One wonders if the ordinary Muslim knows even a fraction of the history of the Muslim

The Communal Triangle in India : by Ashoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan, (Kitabistan, Allahabad) Rs. 4-8-0.

connection with the British. They were the *bête noir* of the British in the beginning of the nineteenth century, they were systematically shut out of the army, as "part of a deliberate policy to enfeeble a great community, to crush the spirit of a proud people"; in 1871 out of 2141 gazetted appointments in Bengal 711 were held by Hindus and 92 were held by Mussalmans; "a hundred and seventy years ago it was impossible for a well-born Mussalman in Bengal to be poor" wrote Dr. Hunter; "at present it is almost impossible for him to continue rich"; Persian and Arabic were "utterly untaught" in the schools, says Bowen, and "the curriculum was so designed as to estrange rather than interest the Muslim"; the tragic story of the Hooghly Trust which was so manipulated as to leave only a fraction of the millions of the trust for Muslim education; "they are a race ruined under the British rule," concluded Dr. Hunter. Well do our authors exclaim : "The Muslim League today is declaiming against the terrible 'atrocities' committed by the Congress Governments during the twenty-seven months that they were in office. It has, however, little to say about a Government which during a period of nearly a hundred years has perpetrated every injustice against the Muslim community. . . . You may take away by force all that a man possesses, and then call him magnanimous, you may do everything to sink him into the mire of poverty and ignorance and then talk of his culture, you may utterly ruin him and then call him a member of a great community. You may do all these things in India, for here unthinkable things are not only thinkable but do-able and often done."

A cold-blooded narration of the working of the British policy in India with the deliberate purpose of playing one community against the other demonstrates to the hilt the truth of the last sentence in the foregoing extract. "In the Montford Report, its distinguished authors expressed themselves against separate electorates, but nonetheless accepted them because of the Congress-League understanding. In 1933 the Communal Award was imposed for exactly the opposite reasons. In 1919 communalism was introduced because the two parties had agreed to it; in 1935 communalism was extended because the Hindus and the Muslims could not agree." The inexorable purpose throughout, of every detail of their policy, no matter how ludicrously inconsistent one may be from the other, is the crushing out of the spirit of nationalism and its strategic value in the perpetuation of the British heel. "The Government of India Act (1935) appreciably widened the franchise. 27.43 out of every 100 adult males in British India are voters. Here was material that nationalism could mobilize. The Government, however, took good care to frustrate such efforts. The electorate in 1919 was broken up into ten parts, now it is fragmented into seventeen unequal bits. Separate electorates were thrust, against their wishes, on women and the Indian Christians. The Hindu community was further weakened by giving separate representation to the scheduled classes.

Divisions on the basis of religion, occupation, and sex were made. Every possible cross-division was introduced." The share of every one of the Empire-builders, beginning with Mount Stuart Elphinstone, Lawrence, and Beck the original exponent of the two-nation theory, to Minto and Samuel Hoare — Lord Irwin's refusal to invite Dr. Ansari to the second Round Table Conference, and his mischievous Massey lecture might have been mentioned too — has been mentioned in its proper place. Amery and Cripps and Churchill and Attlee will deserve a special chapter in a second edition of the book. But the consummation was complete even before Amery and Co. came. The two-nation theory had been enunciated and tacitly accepted by the rulers and taken up as a war-cry by the misguided Mussalmans and Hindus.

That brings us to the brilliant chapters on the two nationalisms in India — the communal nationalism of the two rivals Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha and the democratic nationalism of the Indian National Congress — and the chapters on the Hindu Communalism and the movement for Pakistan. The authors have shown with ruthlessly impartial analysis how the illogicality of one communalism has provoked and stimulated the illogicality of the other; how their narrow self-interest has driven them from one impossible position into another; how the Muslim League shamelessly declares, 'we can go on multiplying the list' (not only of demands, but of 'atrocities' also) and how the Hindu Mahasabha sets up a board called the Hindu Militarization Mandal; how both are anxious for the Congress to fade out, so that the war of attrition exhausts both, destroys the Congress and leaves the field clear for the third Party. Both have no nobler urge than that of power politics, the one deluding itself with the will o' the wisp of a Hindudom meaning the maintenance, protection, and promotion of the Hindu race, Hindu culture, and Hindu civilisation, and the advancement of the glory of Hindu *rashtra*, and the other looking forward to the recreation of the exploded conception of a Muslim theocracy on the strength of methods and tactics which are aptly described as "spuriously Bismarckian" or Hitlerian.

As against this is the democratic nationalism of the Congress — which is not uni-national but broad-based on the fundamental rights of all India's diverse citizens — "recognising the need for nations to expand into peaceful federal units", eschewing violence and therefore all exploitation and "mercantilist adventures", — as Mahatma Gandhi put it recently in his own inimitable way, Indians will go to Burma, but they will do so without guns". For, "only that nationalism can survive in the stress of the modern world which embraces federalism, is anchored in democracy and has an answer to the insistent challenge of war — viz., satyagraha . . . Lincoln condemned slavery because it degraded the master as much as the slave. The same could be said of modern warfare, for no matter how just your cause may be, war in the end will degrade it. One cannot fight the enemy without improving upon the enemy's weapons."

This last can alone be the foundation of a World Federation of Free States, whenever it can be formed. There are erudite chapters in the book on this and kindred subjects, but I must content myself with just a bare mention of them. In these days of spurious nationalisms which are at the root of all the welter of strife and bloodshed, it is something to see two socialist authors stand up for "a moral and political country" which, in the language of Burke, is "distinct from the geographical and which may possibly be in collision with it." "Nationalism," they declare, "has a meaning, it can enlist our allegiance only when its political and moral boundaries are co-terminous."

A question is asked: 'If Britain retires, would communal unity automatically come?' It will not come, for the simple reason that the several years' growth of poisonous weeds will have to be cleared and it may take some time, but the ground will be automatically created, and the poison-root removed, the weeds will not take long to be removed. It is in this work of removal of the weeds that constructive work will have to play a great part. The only hiatus that I have noticed in the book is a chapter surveying the work of those who have devoted themselves during the past twenty years to this task—not only of Gandhiji who fasted 21 days in order to awaken our consciences, but of numerous people like Appa Saheb Patwardhan who often risked their lives in the cause of unity. The epilogue devotes a para or two to methods of improving communal relations. But that is not enough. For only that kind of work will set unity on a firm foundation and prevent it from being wrecked again by outside third parties.

There is many an interesting feature of the book on which one would like to pause—the history of Hindu Muslim relations before the advent of the British, the numerous useful appendices containing facts and figures—but I must cut a long review short and commend the book to every Hindu and Muslim student for careful study. It is a distinct service rendered by the socialist friends and it deserves to be translated into every one of our provincial languages.

M. D.

The Late Dr. Datta

In Dr. Datta, Principal of Forman Christian College, the country has lost a staunch Christian nationalist. I had the privilege of knowing him intimately soon after my return from South Africa. He was an intimate friend of the late Deenabandhu Andrews and he would not be satisfied until he had brought me in touch with every one of his friends. Dr. Datta worked wholeheartedly day and night at the Unity Conference during the anxious time of my 21 days fast in 1924 in Delhi. I saw him again equally earnestly at work at the time of the second Round Table Conference. His loss at this critical juncture in the country's history would be doubly felt. I tender my condolences to Mrs. Datta. His numerous friends will share her sorrow.

Sevagram, 23-6-42

M. K. G.

REPLY TO SIR S. CRIPPS

In an interview by the representative of the United Press of London regarding Sir Stafford Cripps' statement published in the press Gandhiji said:

"I have read Sir Stafford Cripps' statement to the United Press representative in London. It is not conducive to the proper understanding between different parties, if ascertainable facts are not admitted by all. Sir Stafford knows that I was disinclined to proceed to New Delhi. Having gone there, I intended to return the same day that I reached there. But Maulana Saheb would not let me go. I wish that I could have induced the Working Committee to take up its stand on pure non-violence. But it did not and could not. With it, rightly, politics were all important and it could not, not having the conviction, allow its deliberations to be affected by the issue of non-violence. The deliberations, therefore, of the Working Committee at New Delhi were carried on without any interference or guidance on my part. Therefore, the negotiations had nothing to do at any stage with the question of non-violence. I would not have brought out this fact, if it was not relevant to a calm consideration of the situation that faces British and Indian statesmen.

"Nor do I like Sir Stafford's description of my appeal for withdrawal of the British power as a walk-out. The appeal has been made in no offensive mood. It is the friendliest thing that I could do. It is conceived in the interest of the Allied cause. I have made it in a purely non-violent spirit and as a non-violent step. But this is merely personal to me. It is necessary to remember in considering my proposal that it is essentially a non-violent gesture. Such non-violence as India has or may have becomes impotent without the withdrawal of the British power—even as that part of India which will put up an armed fight becomes impotent. The step that I have conceived overcomes all difficulties, shuts all controversy about violence and non-violence and immediately frees India to offer her best help to the Allied cause and more especially to China which is in imminent danger. I am convinced that the independence of India, which the withdrawal of the British power involves, would ensure China's freedom and put the Allied cause on an unassailable basis."

Sevagram, 19-6-42

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Jodhpur Tragedy

HARIJAN

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

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AHMEDABAD—SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 1942

[FIVE PICE

THROW AWAY THE CARCASS

Everyone knows the story of Sindbad the Sailor and the Old Man of the Sea who would not get off his shoulders. To say that Sindbad is India and that the Old Man of the Sea is Britain would cause no surprise. It is a perfectly apt simile, and for Britain to expect India's cooperation is like the Old Man of the Sea asking for Sindbad's cooperation in resisting an assailant without getting off Sindbad's back.

But in a recent interview Gandhiji reversed the simile and likened Britain and the Allies to Sindbad carrying a heavy carcass on his shoulders and appealed to them to throw away the carcass if they would have victory. "India has no heart in the War, in fact she has her eyes on Japan. You may today be denuding her of her resources, but they are the resources of an unwilling India. India is thus a corpse—a heavy carcass of which the weight might make your victory impossible. If by some chance England comes to her senses—the Allies come to their senses—and say, 'let us get rid of this carcass', that single act will give them a power which no military skill or resources and no amount of American help can give them." This is what Gandhiji said to Mr. Preston Grover, the representative of the Associated Press of America, who came specially from Delhi to have his interview.

It was as usual a day of broiling heat and heavy work. Gandhiji had offered to go to Wardha to have his talk with the Maulana who has been keeping indifferent health, rather than let him go to Sevagram. As we went the car broke down about six furlongs from Shethji's bungalow. Gandhiji got down and began to walk in the blazing sun. I could not keep pace with him and collapsed after I had walked a furlong or two. It was only when I got a tonga, on coming round, that I got to the bungalow when Gandhiji had already got there. He evidently can bear this terrible heat, as it is nothing compared to the blazing furnace that is burning within him, and it was to share it with the Maulana that he went to Wardha. After a full two hours' talk with the Maulana and Jawaharlalji, he asked Mr. Grover to come in, and poured out his heart's agony before him for about an hour. "There has been a great deal of questioning in America and India as to the nature of your activities during the balance of the War. I should like to know what it will be like," said Mr. Grover. "But can you tell me when the War will end?" said Gandhiji laughing.

It Will Be Felt by the World

Coming to the point Mr. Grover said again: "There is a good deal of speculation that you are planning some new movement. What is the nature of it?"

"It depends on the response made by the government and the people. I am trying to find out public opinion here and also the reaction on the world outside."

"When you speak of the response, you mean response to your new proposal?"

"Oh yes," said Gandhiji, "I mean response to the proposal that the British Government in India should end today. Are you startled?"

"I am not," said Mr. Grover, "you have been asking for it and working for it."

"That's right. I have been working for it for years. But now it has taken definite shape and I say that the British power in India should go today for the world peace, for China, for Russia and for the Allied cause. I shall explain to you how it advances that Allied cause. Complete independence frees India's energies, frees her to make her contribution to the world crisis. Today the Allies are carrying the burden of a huge corpse—a huge nation lying prostrate at the feet of Britain, I would even say at the feet of the Allies. For America is the predominant partner, financing the war, giving her mechanical ability and her resources which are inexhaustible. America is thus a partner in the guilt."

"Do you see a situation when after full independence is granted American and Allied troops can operate from India?" Mr Grover pertinently asked.

"I do," said Gandhiji. "It will be only then that you will see real cooperation. Otherwise all the effort you put up may fail. Just now Britain is having India's resources because India is her possession. Tomorrow whatever the help, it will be real help from a free India."

"You think India in control interferes with Allied action to meet Japan's aggression?"

"It does."

"When I mentioned Allied troops operating I wanted to know whether you contemplated complete shifting of the present troops from India?"

"Not necessarily."

"It is on this that there is a lot of misconception."

"You have to study all I am writing. I have discussed the whole question in the current issue of *Harijan*. I do not want them to go, on condition that India becomes entirely free. I cannot then insist on their withdrawal, because I want to resist with all my might the charge of inviting Japan to India."

"But suppose your proposal is rejected, what will be your next move?"

"It will be a move which will be felt by the whole world. It may not interfere with the movement of British troops, but it is sure to engage British attention. It would be wrong of them to reject my proposal and say India should remain a slave in order that Britain may win or be able to defend China. I cannot accept that degrading position. India free and independent will play a prominent part in defending China. Today I do not think she is rendering any real help to China. We have followed the non-embarrassment policy so far. We will follow it even now. But we cannot allow the British Government to exploit it in order to strengthen the strangle-hold on India. And today it amounts to that. The way, for instance, in which thousands are being asked to vacate their homes with nowhere to go to, no land to cultivate, no resources to fall back upon, is the reward of our non-embarrassment. This should be impossible in any free country. I cannot tolerate India submitting to this kind of treatment. It means greater degradation and servility, and when a whole nation accepts servility it means good-bye for ever to freedom."

India's Gains from British Victory?

"All you want is the civil grip relaxed. You won't then hinder military activity?" was Mr. Grover's next question.

"I do not know. I want unadulterated independence. If the military activity serves but to strengthen the strangle-hold, I must resist that too. I am no philanthropist to go on helping at the expense of my freedom. And what I want you to see is that a corpse cannot give any help to a living body. The Allies have no moral cause for which they are fighting, so long as they are carrying this double sin on their shoulders, the sin of India's subjection and the subjection of the Negroes and African races."

Mr. Grover tried to draw a picture of a free India after an Allied victory. Why not wait for the boons of victory? Gandhiji mentioned as the boons of the last World War the Rowlatt Act and martial law and Amritsar. Mr. Grover mentioned more economic and industrial prosperity — by no means due to the grace of the government, but by the force of circumstances, and economic prosperity was a step further forward to Swaraj. Gandhiji said the few industrial gains were wrung out of unwilling hands, he set no store by such gains after this war, those gains may be further shackles, and it was a doubtful proposition whether there would be any gains — when one had in mind the industrial policy that was being followed during the war. Mr. Grover did not seriously press the point.

What Can America Do?

"You don't expect any assistance from America in persuading Britain to relinquish her hold on India," asked Mr. Grover half incredulously.

"I do indeed," replied Gandhiji.

"With any possibility of success?"

"There is every possibility, I should think," said Gandhiji. "I have every right to expect America to throw her full weight on the side of justice, if she is convinced of the justice of the Indian cause."

"You don't think the American Government is committed to the British remaining in India?"

"I hope not. But British diplomacy is so clever that America, even though it may not be committed, and in spite of the desire of President Roosevelt and the people to help India, it may not succeed. British propaganda is so well organised in America against the Indian cause that the few friends India has there have no chance of being effectively heard. And the political system is so rigid that public opinion does not affect the administration."

"It may, slowly," said Mr. Grover apologetically.

"Slowly?" said Gandhiji. "I have waited long, and I can wait no longer. It is a terrible tragedy that 40 crores of people should have no say in this war. If we have the freedom to play our part we can arrest the march of Japan and save China."

What Do You Promise to Do?

Mr. Grover, having made himself sure that Gandhiji did not insist on the literal withdrawal of either the British or the troops, now placing himself in the position of the Allies, began to calculate the gains of the bargain. Gandhiji of course does not want independence as a reward of any services, but as a right and in discharge of a debt long overdue. "What specific things would be done by India to save China," asked Mr. Grover, "if India is declared independent?"

"Great things, I can say at once, though I may not be able to specify them today," said Gandhiji. "For I do not know what government we shall have. We have various political organisations here which I expect would be able to work out a proper national solution. Just now they are not solid parties, they are often acted upon by the British power, they look up to it and its frown or favour means much to them. The whole atmosphere is corrupt and rotten. Who can foresee the possibilities of a corpse coming to life? At present India is a dead weight to the Allies."

"By dead weight you mean a menace to Britain and to American interests here?"

"I do. It is a menace in that you never know what sullen India will do at a given moment."

"No, but I want to make myself sure that if genuine pressure was brought to bear on Britain by America, there would be solid support from yourself?"

"Myself? I do not count — with the weight of 73 years on my shoulders. But you get the cooperation

—whatever it can give willingly—of a free and mighty nation. My cooperation is of course there. I exercise what influence I can by my writings from week to week. But India's is an infinitely greater influence. Today because of widespread discontent there is not that active hostility to Japanese advance. The moment we are free, we are transformed into a nation prizing its liberty and defending it with all its might and therefore helping the Allied cause."

"May I concretely ask—will the difference be the difference that there is between what Burma did and what, say, Russia is doing?" said Mr. Grover.

"You might put it that way. They might have given Burma independence after separating it from India. But they did nothing of the kind. They stuck to the same old policy of exploiting her. There was little cooperation from Burmans, on the contrary there was hostility or inertia. They fought neither for their own cause nor for the Allied cause. Now take a possible contingency. If the Japanese compel the Allies to retire from India to a safer base, I cannot say today that the whole of India will be up in arms against the Japanese. I have a fear that they may degrade themselves as some Burmans did. I want India to oppose Japan to a man. If India was free she would do it, it would be a new experience to her, in twenty-four hours her mind would be changed. All parties would then act as one man. If this live independence is declared today I have no doubt India becomes a powerful ally."

Mr. Grover raised the question of communal disunion as a handicap, and himself added that before the American Independence there was not much unity in the States. "I can only say that as soon as the vicious influence of the third party is withdrawn, the parties will be face to face with reality and close up ranks," said Gandhiji. "Ten to one my conviction is that the communal quarrels will disappear as soon as the British power that keeps us apart disappears."

Why not Dominion Status?

"Would not Dominion Status declared today do equally well?" was Mr. Grover's final question.

"No good," said Gandhiji instantaneously. "We will have no half measures, no tinkering with independence. It is not independence that they will give to this party or that party, but to an indefinable India. It was wrong, I say, to possess India. The wrong should be righted by leaving India to herself."

C. R.

"May I finally ask you about your attitude to Rajaji's move?"

"I have declared that I will not discuss Rajaji in public. It is ugly to be talking at valued colleagues. My differences with him stand, but there are some things which are too sacred to be discussed in public."

But Mr. Grover had not so much in mind the Pakistan controversy as C. R.'s crusade for the

formation of a national government. Mr. Grover had the discernment to make it clear that C. R. "could not be motivated by British Government. His position happens to harmonise with them."

"You are right", said Gandhiji. "It is fear of the Japanese that makes him tolerate the British rule. He would postpone the question of freedom until after the war. On the contrary I say that if the war is to be decisively won, India must be freed to play her part today. I find no flaw in my position. I have arrived at it after considerable debating within myself; I am doing nothing in hurry or anger. There is not the slightest room in me for accommodating the Japanese. No, I am sure that India's independence is not only essential for India, but for China and the Allied cause."

"What are the exact steps by which you will save China?"

"The whole of India's mind would be turned away from Japan. Today it is not. C. R. knows it, and it worries him as it should worry any sane patriot. It worries me no less, but it drives me to a contrary conclusion. India lying at the feet of Great Britain may mean China lying at the feet of Japan. I cannot help using this language. I feel it. You may think it startling and big. But why should it be startling? Think of 400 million people hungering for freedom. They want to be left alone. They are not savages. They have an ancient culture, ancient civilisation, such variety and richness of languages. Britain should be ashamed of holding these people as slaves. You may say: 'You deserve it!' If you do, I will simply say it is not right for any nation to hold another in bondage."

"I agree," whispered Mr. Grover.

"I say even if a nation should want to be in bondage it should be derogatory to one's dignity to keep it in bondage. But you have your own difficulties. You have yet to abolish slavery!"

"In United States, you mean?"

"Yes, your racial discrimination, your lynch law and so on. But you don't want me to remind you of these things."

Sevagram, 11-6-42

M. D.

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HARIJAN

June 21

1942

JODHPUR TRAGEDY

(By M. K. Gandhi)

As I had feared, Jodhpur satyagraha has taken a serious and ugly turn. Heaps of paper have come in. From these I gather that arrests are multiplying. Lathi-charges are a daily occurrence. Official circulars have been issued prohibiting the use of private premises by satyagrahis. In fact all the worst things that were experienced during the satyagraha campaigns in British India are being repeated in Jodhpur. Only in Jodhpur they are being done far from the public gaze and a first class tragedy may pass unnoticed and may be buried like many such that have been buried and are being buried even today. The cause of all these troubles is one and so is the remedy. Till it is successfully applied, the painful drama will continue in some shape or form. The British Government cannot escape blame and responsibility for every such happening in the States. It is bound by treaty obligation to protect the people of the States from inhumanities such as those going on in Jodhpur in the name of law and order. The prisoners have no respite even behind the prison bars. The food is bad, usual facilities are denied to them. By way of protest Shri Jai Narayan Vyas has undertaken a hunger-strike till the grievances are redressed or unto death. If he has to die, the death will be upon those who are primarily responsible for the grievances which compel hunger-strokes unto death. Dr. Dwarkanath Kachru has sent an instructive note on Jodhpur from which I take the following for public information:

"The direct authority of the Jodhpur Government extends over 17 % of the total area of the State; the remaining area—about 83 %—is owned by the Jagirdars, about 1300 in number. These Jagirdars are mostly autonomous internally and pay fixed tributes to the Maharaja.

"For a long time now the Political Department has been controlling the affairs in Jodhpur. Thrice during this century the State passed under the direct control and supervision of the Political Department. At present Englishmen—a large number of them—occupy prominent positions in the State. The prime minister is also a retired British official.

"Apart from the British officials, other non-State subject elements also predominate in the State administration. There is thus a "Mulki Movement" which is becoming stronger day by day. There is also a very strong rivalry between the different castes, Rajputs, Brahmins etc., which is very often exploited by the government to play one against the other or to prevent the Lok Parishad from growing stronger.

"The Marwar Lok Parishad, formed in 1938, became, during the course of these four years, a

tremendous force in Jodhpur. Because of the general political backwardness of the Rajputana States, a more advanced mass movement in Jodhpur was destined to lead the vanguard of the popular movement in the whole of Rajputana. An All Rajputana Political Conference was also announced to be held in Jodhpur in March 1940. The mass awakening in Rajputana caused grave anxiety to the Political Department and the Jodhpur Government was instructed to act promptly. The Jodhpur Government therefore declared the Lok Parishad illegal and put all its prominent men in jails. Mass arrests, followed by terrible repression, ended in a compromise with the Government. Marwar Lok Parishad began its constructive work once again and soon came to be recognised by all the people in Marwar, both in the khalsa and jagiri territories. The Parishad contested the Municipal elections and emerged as the majority party in the Board. Its leader became the chairman.

"Since the war began the governments of Indian States have changed their attitude towards popular movements. The war had in fact provided as excuse to suppress civil liberties and check the growth of popular forces. In Jodhpur, where the Political Department has a hand in shaping the policy of the government, Prime Minister Sir Donald Field, set to work according to the instructions from above. Funds had to be procured for war and the whole State had to be put on war footing. Money had largely to be procured from the Jagirdars, who must in turn be protected against the popular movement in the Jagirs led by the Lok Parishad. The State Government thus assumed an attitude of neutrality towards the Jagirs and allowed the Jagirdars to squeeze even the last drop of blood from their subjects.

"But the Lok Parishad could not ignore the grievances and demands of the masses of Marwar living in Jagirs. The Parishad did not want the abolition of the Jagirs, but it certainly wanted the betterment of the people of Jagirs. Repeated requests were made to the government to intervene and secure a just and a humane treatment for the tenants in Jagirs, but unfortunately the government chose to act differently. They encouraged the Jagirdars and suppressed the Lok Parishad workers. Briefly stated the conditions in Jagirs are: (a) the tenants demand regular *latai* (allocation of the shares of the Jagirdars and their tenants). But the Jagirdars would not arrange to do it regularly and often evaded with the result that the tenants suffered, (b) the tenants also want the abolition of such cesses which have been declared illegal in the courts of the States.

"The Government of Jodhpur repeatedly refused to come to the help of the tenants and even refused to stop the exaction of such cesses which were declared illegal in their own courts of law. The Government went a step further and encouraged the Jagirdars themselves to take up cudgels against the Lok Parishad. Thus when the

Jagirdars beat and victimised and even burnt the houses of the Parishad workers the government refused to intervene."

Sevagram, 14-6-42

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Its Meaning

Q. What is the meaning of your appeal to the British power to withdraw from India? You have written much recently on the subject. But there seems to be confusion in the public mind about your meaning.

A. So far as my own opinion is concerned, British authority should end completely irrespective of the wishes or demand of various parties. But I would recognise their own military necessity. They may need to remain in India for preventing Japanese occupation. That prevention is common cause between them and us. It may be necessary for the sake also of China. Therefore I would tolerate their presence in India not in any sense as rulers but as allies of free India. This of course assumes that after the British declaration of withdrawal there will be a stable government established in India. Immediately the hindrance in the shape of a foreign power is altogether removed the union of parties should be an easy matter. The terms on which the Allied powers may operate will be purely for the Government of the free state to determine. The existing parties will have dissolved into the National Government. If they survive they will do so for party purposes and not for dealings with the external world.

What about Non-Violence

Q. But what about your non-violence? To what extent will you carry out your policy after freedom is gained?

A. The question hardly arises. I am using the first personal pronoun for brevity, but I am trying to represent the spirit of India as I conceive it. It is and will be a mixture. What policy the National Government will adopt I cannot say. I may not even survive it much as I would love to. If I do, I would advise the adoption of non-violence to the utmost extent possible and that will be India's great contribution to the peace of the world and the establishment of a new world order. I expect that with the existence of so many martial races in India, all of whom will have a voice in the government of the day, the national policy will incline towards militarism of a modified character. I shall certainly hope that all the effort for the last twenty-two years to show the efficacy of non-violence as a political force will not have gone in vain and a strong party representing true non-violence will exist in the country. In every case a free India in alliance with the allied powers must be of great help to their cause, whereas India held in bondage as she is today must be a drag upon the war-chariot and may prove a source of real danger at the most critical moment.

What about Radio Messages?

Q. You do not hear the radio messages. I do most assiduously. They interpret your writings as if your leanings were in favour of the Axis powers and you had now veered round to Subhas Babu's views about receiving outside help to overthrow the British rule. I would like you to clear your position in this matter. Misinterpretation of your known views has reached a dangerous point.

A. I am glad you have asked the question. I have no desire whatsoever to woo any power to help India in her endeavour to free herself from the foreign yoke. I have no desire to exchange the British for any other rule. Better the enemy I know than the one I do not. I have never attached the slightest importance or weight to the friendly professions of the Axis powers. If they come to India they will come not as deliverers but as sharers in the spoil. There can therefore be no question of my approval of Subhas Babu's policy. The old difference of opinion between us persists. This does not mean that I doubt his sacrifice or his patriotism. But my appreciation of his patriotism and sacrifice cannot blind me to the fact that he is misguided and that his way can never lead to India's deliverance. If I am impatient of the British yoke I am so because India's sullenness and suppressed delight of the man in the street over British reverses are dangerous symptoms which may lead to the success of Japanese designs upon India, if they are not dealt with in the proper manner; whereas India finding herself in possession of complete freedom will never want the Japanese to enter India. India's sullenness and discontent will be changed as if by magic into joyful and hearty cooperation with the Allies in consolidating and preserving her liberty from any and every evil design.

Sevagram, 12-6-42

Notes

Education through Handicrafts

Shrimati Ashadevi sends the following interesting figures :

"The 27 basic schools in the small compact area in the Bettiah Thana, Dist. Champaran, Bihar, completed three years of work in April 1942. The annual economic chart of Grade I, II and III of these schools for the year 1941-42 makes encouraging study for all workers of basic education. The chart will be published in detail in '*Nai Talim*', the monthly organ of basic education. Here we give a brief summary of the principal facts for all who are interested in the progress of basic education. The average attendance for these 27 schools is 70% in Grade I, 76% in Grade II and 79% in Grade III; the average individual earning is 0-11-0 in Grade I, Rs. 2-4-2 in Grade II and Rs. 6-1-1 in Grade III. The total earning of 390 (number based on average attendance) children of 10,264 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 267-8-6 in Grade I, of 356 (number based on average attendance) children of 14,082 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 804-13-8 in Grade II, and of 319 (number

based on average attendance) children of 14,362 total hours of work in all the schools is Rs. 1,935-14-11 in Grade III, i. e. the total earning of 1,065 children is Rs. 3008-2-1 for the whole year. The average maximum individual earning of these schools is Rs. 15-12-0 in Grade III, Rs. 6-2-0 in Grade II and Rs. 2-10-1 in Grade I. The average maximum speed is 480 rounds per hour on the charkha and 281 rounds per hour on the takli for Grade III; 350 rounds per hour on the charkha and 242 rounds per hour on the takli for Grade II; and 164 rounds per hour on the takli for Grade I."

These figures are not given to show the output and the income, important as they are in their place. The output and the income have a secondary place in an education chart. But they are given to demonstrate the high educational value of handicrafts as a means of training the youth. It is clear that without industry, care and attention to detail the work could not have been done.

M. K. G.

Only if They Withdraw

"Till the last day you said there can be no Swaraj without Hindu Muslim unity. Now why is it that you say that there will be no unity until India has achieved independence", the Nagpur correspondent of the *Hindu* asked Gandhiji the other day.

Gandhiji replied, "Time is a merciless enemy, if it is also a merciful friend and healer. I claim to be amongst the oldest lovers of Hindu Muslim unity and I remain one even today. I have been asking myself why every whole-hearted attempt made by all including myself to reach unity has failed, and failed so completely that I have entirely fallen from grace and am described by some Muslim papers as the greatest enemy of Islam in India. It is a phenomenon I can only account for by the fact that the third power, even without deliberately wishing it, will not allow real unity to take place. Therefore I have come to the reluctant conclusion that the two communities will come together almost immediately after the British power comes to a final end in India. If independence is the immediate goal of the Congress and the League then, without needing to come to any terms, all will fight together to be free from bondage. When the bondage is done with, not merely the two organisations but all parties will find it to their interest to come together and make the fullest use of the liberty in order to evolve a national government suited to the genius of India. I do not care what it is called. Whatever it is, in order to be stable, it has to represent the masses in the fullest sense of the term. And, if it is to be broad-based upon the will of the people, it must be predominantly non-violent. Anyway, upto my last breath, I hope I shall be found working to that end, for I see no hope for humanity without the acceptance of non-violence. We are witnessing the bankruptcy of violence from day to day. There is no hope for humanity if the senseless fierce mutual slaughter is to continue."

Sevagram, 11-6-42

M. D.

A RURAL ANTHOLOGY

IV

Not only clothes and shoes but even tools were made in the cottage factory. As James Nasmyth writes in his autobiography:

"Peter Stubbs's files were so vastly superior to other files, both in the superiority of the steel and in the perfection of the cutting, which long retained its efficiency, that every workman gloried in the possession and use of such durable tools. Being naturally interested in everything connected with tools and mechanics, I was exceedingly anxious to visit the factory where these files were made. I obtained an introduction to William Stubbs, the head of the firm, and was received by him with much cordiality. When I asked him if I might be favoured with a sight of his factory, he replied that he had no factory as such; and that all he had to do in supplying his large warehouse was to serve out the requisite quantities of pure cast steel as rods and bars to the workmen; and that they on their part forged the metal into files of every description at their own cottage workshops..."

And apart from the manufacture of clothes and other things of domestic use, cottage industries enabled women in some cases to earn as much money as the menfolk, and even children took part in them with benefit to the family purse and without any undue strain upon themselves. Mr. T. Hennell writes in *Change in the Farm*:

"The commonest sort [of straw-plait] was made by boys and children and paid for at the rate of five pence a score [twenty yards]. It was quite usual for children to be made to plait a score between coming out of school and going to play. For.....elaborate plaits women were often paid half a crown or three shillings a score and so were able to earn eighteen shillings a week, while their husbands got only sixteen shillings a week as labourers. They had to buy the straw which they used, but this was not a heavy proportion of the cost. Thirty yards of fine plait or twenty-six of coarser quality went to make a hat. No doubt it is a craft which could well be revived with much advantage to many British farmers and cottagers, but it has almost been killed by Japanese plaits and coarse rye-straw imported from France."

V

Mr. Bell's delightful little volume not only tells us about the handicrafts practised in the British countryside; it also lets us catch a glimpse of the fine character which "living in constant touch with nature and face to face with reality" (C. J. Sharp) enables the countryman to build for himself.

For one thing a villager often sleeps under the sky, and "sleeping. . . . under the sky, you come to find out for yourself what nobody taught you at school—how Orion is sure to be not there in summer, and Aquila always missing in March, and how the Great Bear, that was straight overhead in the April nights, is wont to hang low in the north in the autumn. Childish as it may seem to the wise, a few years' nightly view of these and other

invariable arrangements may give a simple soul a surprisingly lively twinge of what the ages of faith seem to have meant by the fear of God—the awesome suspicion that there is some sort of fundamental world order or control which cannot by any means be put off or dodged or bribed to help you to break its own laws" (C. E. Montague, *Disenchantment*).

The sympathy and solidarity which unite the members of a village community have been exquisitely described by Mr. W. H. Hudson (*A Traveller in Little Things*):

"I imagined the case of a cottager at one end of the village occupied in chopping up a tough piece of wood or stump and accidentally letting fall his heavy sharp axe on to his foot, inflicting a grievous wound. The tidings of the accident would fly from mouth to mouth to the other extremity of the village, a mile distant; not only would every individual quickly know of it, but have at the same time a vivid mental image of his fellow villager at the moment of the misadventure, the sharp glittering axe falling on to his foot, the red blood flowing from the wound; and he would at the same time feel the wound in his own foot, and the shock to his system."

And hospitality is of course a characteristically rural virtue. Mrs. Burrows in her *Life As We Have Known It* tells us how along with forty other children she used to work fourteen hours a day in the fields about the middle of the nineteenth century. One day "the cold east wind, . . . the sleet and snow. . . . seemed almost to cut us to pieces. . . . Well, the morning passed somehow. . . . Dinner time came, and we were preparing to sit down under a hedge and eat our cold dinner and drink our cold tea, when we saw the shepherd's wife coming towards us, and she said to our ganger, 'Bring these children into my house and let them eat their dinner there.' We went into that very small two-roomed cottage and when we got into the largest room there was not standing room for us all, but this woman's heart was large even if her house was small, and so she put her few chairs and table out into the garden and then we all sat down in a ring upon the floor. She then placed in our midst a very large saucepan of hot boiled potatoes, and bade us help ourselves. Truly, although I have attended scores of grand parties and banquets since that time, not one of them has seemed half as good to me as that meal did. I well remember that woman. She was one of the plainest women I ever knew; in fact she was what the world would call quite ugly, and yet I can't think of her even now without thinking of that verse in one of our hymns where it says:

'No, Earth has angels though their forms are moulded
But of such clay as fashions all below,
Though harps are wanting, and bright pinions folded,
We know them by the love-light on their brow.'

We will close with Mr. Alexander Somerville's description in *Autobiography of a Working Man* of a stone mason Alick F—, who gave him some new

ideas about the killing of birds and beasts. He said it was mean to put down a snare and catch a hare in the dark. He ridiculed the delight which people took in shooting. "I was with him one wintry day on the sea-shore.....He was quarrying stones in a sheltered nook, and I had taken my gun, because it was a stormy day, to have a shot at the sea-birds, which could be more easily reached in tempestuous weather than at other times. Thus we met. In the midst of our geological speculations.....and just as we had admired the magnificence of a wave which seemed in itself to be a sea risen on end to overwhelm the land, I saw a redshank on the wing, which I thought was within shot, and snatched up the gun to shoot it. He stopped me on the instant and said, 'Let it go! What if the hand, which has more power over that ocean and these waves than you have over that gun and the shot within it, were to have as little mercy for living things? What, if you and I were redshanks, or that all this nation was as but one redshank, and the author of this storm, which permits that redshank to live which you would have killed, should have lifted his arm against us?'"

(Concluded)

V. G. D.

AMERICAN RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

The treatment of the Negro by the whites in America and racial discrimination operating against him in various walks of life has been discussed in these columns already. A brief reference may now be made to America's policy of racial discrimination against Asiatics—especially the Chinese who are now America's allies. The February number of *Asia* contains a studiedly objective article on the subject by Dr. Spinks who makes out a strong plea for the immediate repeal of Chinese exclusion. Says Dr. Spinks: "Today the future of the United States has become more dependant than ever before upon our relations with the millions of inhabitants of Asia. Whether in war or in peace, whether as enemies or friends, we must henceforth deal with all these peoples upon a basis of equality. We cannot inspire their confidence in our efforts to make this a better world for humanity if our own laws and policies so glaringly place the Asiatic races in a different category from the rest of mankind." The plea is thus made both on the grounds of justice and expedience, though it is little realised that true justice is always the best expediency.

Dr. Spinks complains that "by our own action we ourselves are today violating two of the essential principles" for the violation of which the Axis powers are being strongly condemned. "By our immigration laws, the United States not only excludes over one quarter of the human race from the application of justice and equality, but singles out the Chinese people for a most shameful and categorical form of discrimination." He mentions the various measures on the statute book of the United States of which the very purpose is exclusion and discrimination. The United States Immigration

Law of 1924 excludes no Chinese or any other race as such, but excludes those who are ineligible to American citizenship, and the Supreme Court decisions in several cases have ruled that Asiatic races—including Indian—are ineligible for citizenship. Thus the Chinese, the Indians, the Japanese are all debarred except "in case of certain exempt classes (students and merchants) who can enter and reside here temporarily."

This however was what may be called dealing injustice to all Asiatics with an even hand. But China was singled out more especially than others, as we shall presently see. "The American Treaty with China of 1894 gave the United States the right to suspend *all* immigration for ten years. In 1902 Chinese exclusion was applied to the American insular possessions, and finally in 1904 the Chinese exclusion acts were made perpetual"—and this is in force in spite of the all-comprehensive law of 1924, and thus "the United States has singled out the Chinese by name for categorical discrimination and exclusion." A section of an Act of 1884 makes it obligatory for a Chinese holding passports to have in addition to the passport which does define his occupational status a certificate to the effect that the holder intends to make a temporary visit to the United States. "By this provision the United States in effect does not recognise a passport of the Government of China, which is fully tantamount to not recognising the sovereign power of that country."

"The only bar to immigration based on race", says the Encyclopaedia Britannica, "was the prohibition, since 1888, of Chinese immigration and the practical exclusion of Japanese labourers by a 'gentlemen's agreement' with the Japanese Government." Also, "the Chinese decreased in number, as might be expected from the policy of exclusion; in 1910 there were 71,531 and in 1920, 61,639. The number of Japanese however increased from 72,157 to 111,010, or 53.9 per cent." The Tables for Immigrant Aliens by country and by race give no figures of Asiatics or Orientals, which means that they are nil or negligible.

But to proceed. The Chinese are "justly sensitive and resentful" over a provision in the law prohibiting them from marrying women of their home-land and bringing them to the United States permanently. The Chinese population in America "is overwhelmingly male", and the resentment is thus natural.

Then the Chinese, as distinguished from all other Asiatic or non-Asiatic races, "must enter the United States at certain designated ports"—apart from the courtesy that legitimate Chinese immigrants, too often meet with at the hands of immigration officials.

The Chinese have felt the sting of the racial insult, and Dr. Spinks notes that the first anti-foreign boycott in China in 1905 was "directed against the

United States over our exclusion policy." Japan could make of the question a burning international political issue as she had attained the position of a "great" power, but it was precisely because Japan did so that it is said that the whole question of Asiatic immigration was prejudiced. The argument that unless Asiatics are specifically banned, they will in some way or other enter the United States in such numbers as to bring about serious economic and social problems, is dismissed by Dr. Spinks as fallacious, because if the quota system of 1924 which is applied to non-Asiatics were applied to the Asiatics there would be little social or economic disaster. This quota system consists of permission to all non-Asiatic nations to send as immigrants two per cent. of its population resident in the U. S. A. in 1890. Dr. Spinks calculates that if this system were to be applied to Asiatics "only about two thousand Chinese, a mere handful of Indians and other Asiatics and (when the war is over) only a hundred and eighty Japanese could enter the United States annually. Despite their racial and cultural differences, such meagre numbers could not conceivably give rise to economic and social problems." It may be interesting to note in this connection the figures of Asiatic population in the U. S. A. In 1870 there were 63,119 Chinese and 75 Japanese there. In 1930 there were 74,954 Chinese (16 per cent. increase in 60 years), but the Japanese had increased to 138,834 (because of gentleman's agreements with the Great Asiatic power) and other Orientals were only 50,978 in a total population of 12 crores. (Statesman's Year Book, 1937.) While the war lasts even if a partial open door was declared on the quota basis there would be little Chinese immigration.

Dr. Spinks dismisses equally summarily the legal argument—viz., the sovereign right to exclude certain races. This is nothing, says he, before the "broader, more fundamental principle of racial equality which has been a vital part of our national policy and which today is prerequisite to our concept of a new world order." In other words, rather than indulge in big talk of a new world order, make the just and righteous beginning now, and free yourselves of the charge of hypocrisy.

Sevagram, 11-6-42

M. D.

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Important Questions**HARIJAN**

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

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[FIVE PICE]

AN IMPORTANT INTERVIEW

The heat here this year has been uncommonly oppressive, and even those who may be said to be inured to it have felt it. But Gandhiji would not listen to any suggestion of moving to a cooler place—so possessed he is of his new idea, so disinclined he is to go to any other place but the environment that has now become part of himself. And though this serious preoccupation leaves him little time to meet people, he has willingly met press correspondents and opened his heart out to them. They too in their turn have come in this sweltering heat, but that is a pressman's job—to defy wind and weather and wrest facts out of events. So one hot afternoon two American journalists came—Mr. Chaplin of the International News Service, America, and Mr. Belldon representing the *Life* and *Time*. The latter is fresh from China and Burma. Both had heard rumours in New Delhi that Gandhiji might soon be arrested, and they naturally did not want to be forestalled. So they came post-haste, without even waiting for a reply giving them an appointment.

It was no joke jogging along in a rickety tonga through the treeless road that runs between Wardha and Sevagram. Gandhiji immediately put them in a good humour. "You came in an air-conditioned coach?" "No," they said, "but we had armed ourselves with some ice." Mr. Chaplin said he was a great friend of the late Jim Mills and that revived our memories of that genial American who, Gandhiji said, after the manner of American journalists, often embellished truth to make it look nicer. Mr. Chaplin demurred to the generalisation, and said they were quite careful about truth. Gandhiji did not mean to suggest that they deliberately mixed untruth with truth; they loved to give truth an attractive, if imaginative, background, as, for instance, Jim Mills described Gandhiji sharing his goat's milk with a tame cat, when there was no cat in the picture. "The native genius" of Americans, John Buchan has said, "is for overstatement, a high-coloured, imaginative, paradoxical extravagance. The British gift is for understatement. Both are legitimate figures of speech. They serve the same purpose, for they call attention to a fact by startling the hearer, for manifestly they are not the plain truth." There, I think, is a just estimate of American journalists.

Gandhiji had just emerged from an intensive talk with another American when these friends came, and so he said greeting them, "one American has been vivisecting me. I am now at your disposal."

Why Non-violent Non-Cooperation?

They had read all kinds of things about Gandhiji's latest move—his own words wrenched from their context, and words written about him. "It is your worst side that is known in New Delhi, and not your best," another journalist had said to Gandhiji, and they were therefore anxious to straighten out wrong notions if they had any. Why non-violent non-cooperation, rather than honest straightforward resistance against the Japanese? Far from preventing the Japanese, non-violent non-cooperation, they feared, might prove an invitation to them, and would not that be flying from the frying pan into the fire?

Gandhiji put a counter-question in reply:

"Supposing England retires from India for strategic purposes, and apart from my proposal,—as they had to do in Burma—what would happen? What would India do?"

"That is exactly what we have come to learn from you. We would certainly like to know that."

"Well, therein comes my non-violence. For we have no weapons. Mind you, we have assumed that the Commander-in-Chief of the united American and British Armies has decided that India is no good as a base, and that they should withdraw to some other base and concentrate the allied forces there. We can't help it. We have then to depend on what strength we have. We have no army, no military resources, no military skill either, worth the name, and non-violence is the only thing we can fall back upon. Now in theory I can prove to you that our non-violent resistance can be wholly successful. We need not kill a single Japanese, we simply give them no quarter."

"But that non-violence can't prevent an invasion?"

"In non-violent technique, of course, there can be nothing like preventing an invasion. They will land, but they will land on an inhospitable shore. They may be ruthless and wipe out all the 400 millions. That would be complete victory. I know you will laugh at it, saying 'all this is superhuman, if not absurd'. I would say you are right, we may not be able to stand that terror and we may have to go through a course of subjection worse than our present state. But we are discussing the theory."

"But if the British don't withdraw?"

"I do not want them to withdraw under Indian pressure, nor driven by force of circumstances. I want them to withdraw in their own interest, for their own good name."

"But what happens to your movement, if you are arrested, as we heard you might be? Or if Mr. Nehru is arrested? Would not the movement go to pieces?"

"No, not if we have worked among the people. Our arrests would work up the movement, they would stir every one in India to do his little bit."

"Supposing Britain decides to fight to the last man in India, would not your non-violent non-cooperation help the Japanese?" asked Mr. Chaplin reverting to the first question he had asked.

"If you mean non-cooperation with the British, you would be right. We have not come to that stage. I do not want to help the Japanese—not even for freeing India. India during the past fifty or more years of her struggle for freedom has learnt the lesson of patriotism and of not bowing to any foreign power. But when the British are offering violent battle, our non-violent battle—our non-violent activity—would be neutralised. Those who believe in armed resistance and in helping the British militarily are and will be helping them. Mr. Amery says he is getting all the men and money they need, and he is right. For the Congress—a poor organisation representing the millions of the poor of India—has not been able to collect in years what they have collected in a day by way of what I would say 'so-called' voluntary subscription. This Congress can only render non-violent assistance. But let me tell you, if you do not know it, that the British do not want it, they don't set any store by it. But whether they do it or not, violent and non-violent resistance cannot go together. So India's non-violence can at best take the form of silence—not obstructing the British forces, certainly not helping the Japanese."

"But not helping the British?"

"Dont you see non-violence cannot give any other aid?"

"But the railways, I hope, you won't stop; the services, too, will be, I hope, allowed to function."

"They will be allowed to function, as they are being allowed today."

"Aren't you then helping the British by leaving the services and the railways alone?" asked Mr. Belldon.

"We are indeed. That is our non-embarrassment policy."

A Bad Job

"But what about the presence of American troops here? Every American feels that we should help India to win her freedom."

"It's a bad job."

"Because it is said we are here really to help Britain and not India?"

"I say it is a bad job, because it is an imposition on India. It is not at India's request or with India's consent that they are here. It is enough irritation that we were not consulted before being dragged into this war—I am not sure that the Viceroy even consulted his Executive Council. That is our original complaint. To have brought the American forces is, in my opinion, to have made the stranglehold on us all the tighter."

"Yo do not know what is happening in India—it is naturally not your business to go into those things. But let me give you some facts. Thousands of villagers are being summarily asked to vacate their homes and go elsewhere, for the site of their homesteads is needed by the military. Now I ask, where are they to go? Thousands of poor labourers in a certain place, I have heard today, have been asked to evacuate. Paltry compensations are offered them, and they are not even given sufficient notice. This kind of thing will not happen in an independent country. The Sappers and Miners there would first build homes for these people, transport would be provided for them, they would be given, at least six months' maintenance allowance before they would be uprooted from their surroundings. Are these things to happen, even before the Japanese have come here? There is no other way, but saying to them, 'you must go', and if British rule ends, that moral act will save America and Britain. If they choose to remain here, they should remain as friends, not as proprietors of India. The American and British soldiers may remain here, if at all, by virtue of a compact with Free India."

"Don't you think Indian people and leaders have some duty to help accelerate the process?"

"You mean by dotting India with rebellions everywhere? No, my invitation to the British to withdraw is not an idle one. It has to be made good by the sacrifice of the invitors. Public opinion has got to act, and it can act only non-violently."

"Is the possibility of strikes precluded?" wondered Mr. Belldon.

"No", said Gandhiji, "strikes can be and have been non-violent. If railways are worked only to strengthen the British hold on India, they need not be assisted. But before I decide to take any energetic measures I must endeavour to show the reasonableness of my demand. The moment it is complied with, India instead of being sullen becomes an ally. Remember I am more interested than the British in keeping the Japanese out. For Britain's defeat in Indian waters may mean only the loss of India, but if Japan wins India loses everything."

The Crucial Test

"If you regard the American troops as an imposition, would you regard the American Technical Mission also in the same light?" was the next question.

"A tree is judged by its fruit", said Gandhiji succinctly. "I have met Dr. Grady, we have had cordial talks. I have no prejudice against Americans. I have hundreds, if not thousands of friends, in America. The Technical Mission may have nothing but good will for India. But my point is that all the things that are happening are not happening at the invitation or wish of India. Therefore they are all suspect. We cannot look upon them with philosophic calmness, for the simple reason that we cannot close our eyes, as I have said, to the things that are daily happening in front of our eyes. Areas are being vacated and turned into military camps, people being thrown on their own resources. Hundreds, if not thousands, on their way from Burma

perished without food and drink, and the wretched discrimination stared even these miserable people in the face. One route for the whites, another for the blacks! Provision of food and shelter for the whites, none for the blacks! And discrimination even on their arrival in India! India is being ground down to dust and humiliated, even before the Japanese advent, not for India's defence—and no one knows for whose defence. And so one fine morning I came to the decision to make this honest demand: 'For Heaven's sake leave India alone. Let us breathe the air of freedom. It may choke us, suffocate us, as it did the slaves on their emancipation. But I want the present sham to end.'"

"But it is the British troops you have in mind, not the American?"

"It does not make for me the slightest difference, the whole policy is one and indivisible."

"Is there any hope of Britain listening?"

"I will not die without that hope. And if there is a long lease of life for me, I may even see it fulfilled. For there is nothing unpractical in the proposal, no insuperable difficulties about it. Let me add that if Britain is not willing to do so wholeheartedly Britain does not deserve to win."

What Would Free India Do?

Gandhiji had over and over again said that an orderly withdrawal would result in a sullen India becoming a friend and ally. These American friends now explored the implications of that possible friendship: "Would a Free India declare war against Japan?"

"Free India need not do so. It simply becomes the ally of the Allied Powers, simply out of gratefulness for the payment of a debt, however overdue. Human nature thanks the debtor when he discharges the debt."

"How then would this alliance fit in with India's non-violence?"

"It is a good question. The *whole* of India is not non-violent. If the *whole* of India had been non-violent, there would have been no need for my appeal to Britain, nor would there be any fear of a Japanese invasion. But my non-violence is represented possibly by a hopeless minority, or perhaps by India's dumb millions who are temperamentally non-violent. But there too the question may be asked: 'What have they done?' They have done nothing, I agree; but they may act when the supreme test comes, and they may not. I have no non-violence of millions to present to Britain, and what we have has been discounted by the British as non-violence of the weak. And so all I have done is to make this appeal on the strength of bare inherent justice, so that it might find an echo in the British heart. It is made from a moral plane, and even as they do not hesitate to act desperately in the physical field and take grave risks, let them for once act desperately on the moral field and declare that India is independent today, irrespective of India's demand."

What about Muslims?

"But what does a free India mean, if, as Mr. Jinnah said, Muslims will not accept Hindu rule?"

"I have not asked the British to hand over India to the Congress or to the Hindus. Let them entrust India to God or in modern parlance to anarchy. Then all the parties will fight one another like dogs, or will, when real responsibility faces them, come to a reasonable agreement. I shall expect non-violence to arise out of that chaos."

"But whom are the British to say—'India is free'?" asked the friends with a certain degree of exasperation.

"To the world", said Gandhiji without a moment's hesitation. "Automatically the Indian army is disbanded from that moment, and they decide to pack up as soon as they can. Or they may declare they would pack up only after the war is over, but that they would expect no help from India, impose no taxes, raise no recruits—beyond what help India chooses to give voluntarily. British rule will cease from that moment, no matter what happens to India afterwards. Today it is all a hypocrisy, unreality. I want that to end. The new order will come only when that falsity ends."

"It is an unwarranted claim Britain and America are making", said Gandhiji concluding the talk, "the claim of saving democracy and freedom. It is a wrong thing to make that claim, when there is this terrible tragedy of holding a whole nation in bondage."

Q. What can America do to have your demand implemented?

A. If my demand is admitted to be just beyond cavil, America can insist on the implementing of the Indian demand as a condition of her financing Britain and supplying her with her matchless skill in making war machines. He who pays the piper has the right to call the tune. Since America has become the predominant partner in the allied cause she is partner also in Britain's guilt. The Allies have no right to call their cause to be morally superior to the Nazi cause so long as they hold in custody the fairest part and one of the most ancient nations of the earth.

Sevagram, 7-6-42

M. D.

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HARIJAN

June 14

1942

IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A friend was discussing with me the implications of the new proposal. As the discussion was naturally desultory, I asked him to frame his questions which I would answer through *Harijan*. He agreed and gave me the following:

1. Q. You ask the British Government to withdraw immediately from India. Would Indians thereupon form a national Government, and what groups or parties would participate in such an Indian Government?

A. My proposal is one-sided, i. e. for the British Government to act upon, wholly irrespective of what Indians would do or would not do. I have even assumed temporary chaos on their withdrawal. But if the withdrawal takes place in an orderly manner, it is likely that on their withdrawal a provisional Government will be set up by and from among the present leaders. But another thing may also happen. All those who have no thought of the nation but only of themselves may make a bid for power and get together the turbulent forces with which they would seek to gain control somewhere and somehow. I should hope that with the complete, final and honest withdrawal of the British power, the wise leaders will realise their responsibility, forget their differences for the moment and set up a provisional Government out of the material left by the British power. As there would be no power regulating the admission or rejection of parties or persons to or from the council board, restraint alone will be the guide. If that happens probably the Congress, the League and the States representatives will be allowed to function and they will come to a loose understanding on the formation of a provisional national Government. All this is necessarily guesswork and nothing more.

2. Q. Would that Indian national Government permit the United Nations to use Indian territory as a base of military operations against Japan and other Axis powers?

A. Assuming that the national Government is formed and if it answers my expectations, its first act would be to enter into a treaty with the United Nations for defensive operations against aggressive powers, it being common cause that India will have nothing to do with any of the Fascist powers and India would be morally bound to help the United Nations.

3. Q. What further assistance would this Indian national Government be ready to render the United Nations in the course of the present war against the Fascist aggressors?

A. If I have any hand in guiding the imagined national Government, there would be no further assistance save the toleration of the United

Nations on the Indian soil under well-defined conditions. Naturally there will be no prohibition against any Indian giving his own personal help by way of being a recruit ^{or} _{and} of giving financial aid. It should be understood that the Indian army has been disbanded with the withdrawal of British power. Again if I have any say in the councils of the national Government, all its power, prestige, and resources would be used towards bringing about world peace. But of course after the formation of the national Government my voice may be a voice in the wilderness and nationalist India may go war-mad.

4. Q. Do you believe this collaboration between India and the Allied powers might or should be formulated in a treaty of alliance or an agreement for mutual aid?

A. I think the question is altogether premature and in any case it will not much matter whether the relations are regulated by treaty or agreement. I do not even see any difference.

Let me sum up my attitude. One thing and only one thing for me is solid and certain. This unnatural prostration of a great nation—it is neither 'nations' nor 'peoples'—must cease if the victory of the Allies is to be ensured. They lack the moral basis. I see no difference between the Fascist or Nazi powers and the Allies. All are exploiters, all resort to ruthlessness to the extent required to compass their end. America and Britain are very great nations, but their greatness will count as dust before the bar of dumb humanity, whether African or Asiatic. They and they alone have the power to undo the wrong. They have no right to talk of human liberty and all else unless they have washed their hands clean of the pollution. That necessary wash will be their surest insurance of success, for they will have the good wishes—unexpressed but no less certain—of millions of dumb Asiatics and Africans. Then, but not till then, will they be fighting for a new order. This is the reality. All else is speculation. I have allowed myself, however, to indulge in it as a test of my *bona fides* and for the sake of explaining in a concrete manner what I mean by my proposal.

No Salvation without Sacrifice

Accounts pour in upon me from all quarters about the action of the authorities demanding evacuation without notice. Sometimes it is a zamindar who is to surrender his bungalow and sometimes it is a middle class man who has to surrender his house with fans and furniture for the use of the military. More often it is villagers or labourers who are called upon under promise of compensation to vacate their quarters. The condition of these people is piteous. They do not know where to go. To these I can only say, 'Do not move and take the consequence.' They cannot be forcibly ejected. Even if they are, their cry will be heard whereas newspaper articles will be of little avail.

Sevagram, 8-6-42

M. K. G.

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The Princes' Determination

Q. The Princes seem to be determined to maintain their privileges even after the departure of the British. Therefore there is need for a plain declaration that they would have no place in a Free India. My feeling is that you have so far shown them more consideration than they deserve.

A. If you are right in your judgment, the privileges themselves will destroy the Princes. Privileges that service of the people bestows will always persist. But most of the paraphernalia that 'pomp and circumstance' account for will most certainly go.

But I cannot make the declaration you will have me to make. It is contrary to the spirit of non-violence which seeks not to destroy but to purify. That which is beyond purification dies without any outside effort even as a body which has become wholly diseased dies.

If after the total withdrawal of the British power, there is found to be no awakening among the masses India will be split up into so many feudal strongholds each striving to swallow the small fry and some bidding for overlordship. What I am hoping and striving for is an irresistible mass urge on the part of the people and an intelligent response on the part of all privileged classes to the popular demand. But because I know that this picture is for the time being imaginary, I am quite prepared for the worst. Hence my statement that I would end the present state of things even at the risk of anarchy reigning supreme in the land.

Sevagram, 5-6-42

If They Come

Q. (1) If the Japs come, how are we to resist them non-violently?

(2) What are we to do if we fall into their hands?

A. (1) These questions come from Andhra Pradesh where the people rightly or wrongly feel that the attack is imminent. My answer has already been given in these columns. Neither food nor shelter is to be given nor are any dealings to be established with them. They should be made to feel that they are not wanted. But of course things are not going to happen quite so smoothly as the question implies. It is a superstition to think that they will come as friendlies. No attacking party has ever done so. It spreads fire and brimstone among the populace. It forces things from people. If the people cannot resist fierce attack and are afraid of death, they should evacuate the infested place in order to deny compulsory service to the enemy.

(2) If unfortunately some people are captured or fall into the enemy's hands, they are likely to be shot if they do not obey orders, e. g. render forced labour. If the captives face death cheerfully, their task is done. They have saved their own and their country's honour. They could have done nothing more if they had offered violent

resistance, save perhaps taking a few Japanese lives and inviting terrible reprisals.

The thing becomes complicated when you are captured alive and subjected to unthinkable tortures to compel submission. You will neither submit to torture nor to the orders of the enemy. In the act of resistance you will probably die and escape humiliation. But it is said that death is prevented to let the victim go through the agony of tortures and to serve as an example to others. I however think that a person who would die rather than go through inhuman tortures would find honourable means of dying.

Sevagram, 3-6-42

CASUAL NOTES

Falsehood in War-time

At the end of this war some one like Mr. Ponsonby will have to write the second volume of *Falsehood in War-time*. Many of the discoveries of the falsehoods will be after the termination of the war, but some can be found out even during the war — they are so painfully patent. Thus, for instance, the Governor of Burma who is now having a "well-earned" rest in Simla made a pompous statement on arrival in India. He declared that there was no "considerable disloyalty among Burmans"; that "the Japanese are unable to get a single Burman of any weight to join their side", and that "there is not a single Burman Quisling and I am proud of it."

One wonders who then were the people described as "Burman traitors" in despatches from Burma. General Wavell did admit that there was a certain amount of Burman betrayal, and now General Alexander has given the lie direct to Sir Dorman-Smith. The Japanese, he said, were helped "by pro-Japanese Burmans", that though they were not more than ten per cent of the population, their number was the same as those who were pro-British, and they were better "organised and active agents" than the latter.

Regarding "Quislings" one would like to know from Sir Dorman-Smith the whereabouts and the present occupation of his Ministers — how many came with him from Burma, how many remained there and why, and whether any one has gone over to the enemy.

Disastrous Admissions

But we are not so much concerned about proving the falsehood of the Burma Governor's statements as to draw pointed attention to some of the obvious admissions made by General Alexander. Having accounted for the 20 per cent of the active part of the Burmese people, General Alexander says: "The remaining 80 per cent loathed the idea of war and only wanted to be left alone." He does not tell us why, but the reason is not far to seek. It was the suicidal policy of the British Government not to arm the citizens and not to train them. That was the story in Malay and that is the story in India. And so far as fighting is concerned, the discovery is now being made that "the last thing you wanted in Burma was mechanization", and unfortunately that was the first and

only thing they took in Burma "The Japanese were specially trained to live and operate" in a foreign country, whereas those who claimed the country as their own were foreigners there, too lazy or too proud to learn the condition of things in the land of their occupation!

And Singapore

And now look at the story from Singapore. Cecil Brown, who was in Singapore a few hours before the fall, was banned from broadcasting through Singapore, because British authorities believed his stinging criticism of official complacency "too bad for morale". But when he went to Sydney, the Australian censors allowed him to broadcast from there. Here are some sentences from that broadcast: "The British were heavily outnumbered and unable to stop the Japanese infiltration attacks. The troops were not adequately trained for jungle fighting and could not adapt themselves in a few weeks." "Every American and British correspondent affirmed that censorship in Singapore did everything possible to hide the situation from those civilians expected to fight the battle for Singapore. The tragic story of Singapore is not all one of Japanese numerical superiority, fanatical courage and brilliant military scheming. The Japanese are at Singapore also because of what the British failed to foresee, prepare for, and meet." (Italics ours)

The Only Way

The *Time* in a long article tries to summarise the Indian case and the British case, and concludes: "Whatever the experts and officials" (men on the spot in India) "and vested interests were saying last week, the British people were calling for Indian self-government, calling for it in such words as these: 'We treat them like dirt and then expect them to fight.' Only time could fairly judge the complex Indian cases. But neither Japan nor the British people had time to waste. Unless every possible iota of Indian strength and spirit were called on, a day might soon come when Britain's Captains and Kings would depart from India, and the fire of Britain's power and glory would sink, perhaps for ever, from India's dunes and headlands."

"We treat them like dirt." How tragically true it is today!

The *Philadelphia Record* puts the matter in the most unequivocal manner:

"India is not ready for war. The cause is deeper than the lack of guns and tanks. The nationalist spirit is necessary for modern war, and the British have spent centuries trying to stamp out any movement toward nationalism in India.

"There are now moves to give India a measure of independence. The British Government is reported ready to send a Cabinet Minister out there to bolster morale.

"Such steps might be worse than none at all.

"Small doses of independence and recognition would not satisfy India and might give the Axis something to crow about.

"It is almost a certainty that the day it is freed, India will be willing and anxious to enter the British Commonwealth as a dominion and that it

would declare war on the Axis Powers. Under those conditions even a poorly equipped India might show the same amazing human resources that an ill-equipped China has shown.

"Generalissimo Chiang-Kai-Shek, who understands the military capabilities of India, 'hopes and expects' that Britain will grant India freedom as a war measure.

"Such a hope is shared by most of the people in the United Nations including Britain."

But the dose that the British Cabinet Minister brought was not only an inadequate dose of Independence, it was a dose which poisoned Independence, and which made India more than ever determined to have no patience with the Empire and the British Commonwealth. A "poorly equipped India" might indeed show "the same amazing resources that an ill-equipped China has shown," but that can happen only if she was free. The Government has not even the common-sense to consult one like Rajaji who is crying himself hoarse for unity and national Government and for resisting Japanese aggression. With them not only the masses whom they have never armed are suspect, Rajaji also is suspect.

The Only Alternative

And since the opportunity of calling on "every possible iota of Indian strength and spirit" is now gone — never to return — because of the obtuseness of the British, and since haphazard, unprepared and unforeseen warfare may be fraught with disaster, Gandhiji has placed an honourable alternative before them, viz., not to ask for American help (men and munitions), not to antagonise the populace by stupid methods of harassing evacuation, but to listen to the voice of justice, make an orderly withdrawal and leave India to fight her own battle.

Sevagram, 8-6-42

M. D.

A RURAL ANTHOLOGY

III

The elevating influence of these handicrafts is thus dwelt upon by Miss Gertrude Jekyll in *Old West Surrey*:

"The sight of these simple pieces of mechanism — mechanism that supplemented but did not supplant hand labour — makes one think how much fuller and more interesting was the rural home life of the older days, when nearly everything for daily use and daily food was made and produced on the farm or in the immediate district: when people found their joy in life at home, instead of frittering away half their time in looking for it somewhere else; when they honoured their own state of life by making the best of it within its own good limits, instead of tormenting themselves with a restless striving to be, or at any rate to appear to be, something that they are not. Surely that older life was better and happier and more fruitful, and even, I venture to assume, much fuller of sane and wholesome daily interests. Surely it is more interesting, and the thing when made of a more vital value when it is made at home from the very beginning, than when it is bought at a shop." (The italics are mine.)

The same theme moves Mr. George Sturt to eloquence in his *The Wheelwright's Shop*:

"But no higher wage, no income, will buy for men the satisfaction which of old — until machinery made drudges of them — streamed into their muscles all day long from close contact with iron, timber, clay, wind and wave, horse-strength. It tingled up in the niceties of touch, sight, scent. The very ears unawares received it, as when the plane went singing over the wood, or the exact chisel went tapping in (under the mallet) to the hard ash with gentle sound. But these intimacies are over. Although they have so much more leisure, men can now taste little solace in life, of the sort that skilled handwork used to yield to them. Just as the seaman today has to face the stoke-hole rather than the gale and knows more of heat-waves than of sea waves, so throughout. In what was once the wheelwright's shop, where Englishmen grew friendly with the grain of timber and with sharp tool, nowadays untrained youths wait upon machines, hardly knowing oak from ash or caring for the qualities of either. And this is but one tiny item in the immensity of changes which have overtaken labour throughout the civilised world."

(To be continued)

V. G. D.

DR. TARACHAND AND HINDUSTANI

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The following was sent for the question box by Shri Murlidhar Sivastava M. A.:

"When prejudices come in, one is led to distort history. Dr. Tarachand is an ardent advocate of Hindustani as you are. He has every right to hold his view as you or I have to hold my own, but in his zeal he has grossly misrepresented the history of Brajbhasha by declaring that no writing in Braj is known to have appeared before the 16th century, in an attempt to prove that Hindustani ('Khari Boli') has older literature than Brajbhasha. According to him Surdas was the first poet to write in Braj in the 16th century. As the learned Doctor has been quoted by you in the *Harijan* dated 29-3-42, which commands wide publicity and authority, the mistake must be pointed out. For literature prior to Surdas, you have only to read the poems of Kabir, not to speak of Amir Khusru, some of whose verses are also in Brajbhasha. Several small pieces of poems are attributed to several Santas and Bhaktas prior to Surdas and they can be looked into any standard history of Hindi literature."

I have removed the portion that had no bearing on the question at issue. I sent the letter to Kaka Saheb Kalekar who made it over to Dr. Tarachand who has now sent the following reply which speaks for itself:

"My view that the literature of Brajbhasha is not older than the sixteenth century is based on the following considerations:

1. Brajbhasha is a modern language which belongs to the group named tertiary Prakrits or New Indo-Aryan. This group developed from the secondary Prakrits or Middle Indo-Aryan. Unfortunately the stages between the secondary and tertiary cannot be traced with absolute certainty. But most scholars are agreed that secondary Prakrit stage lasted from 600 B. C. to 1000 A. D.

2. The secondary Prakrits which were spoken dialects received the impetus towards literary development

from the religious movements inaugurated by Mahavira and Buddha. Of these Prakrits, Pali became the most important, as it was adopted as the medium of sacred texts of the Buddhists. Ardh-Magadhi, which served a similar purpose in regard to the Jainas, came next in importance. There were other Prakrits also in use, for instance, Maharashtri which was the medium of song and poetry, Saurseni which was employed in dramas as the language of the ladies etc.

3. By the sixth century A. D. the Prakrits had become fixed and dead languages. Literature continued to be produced in them, but their development had ceased. In this century the languages of common speech, from which literary Prakrits had diverged, began to be used for literary purposes. This phase of literary growths of the Prakrits is given the name Apabhramsha. It lasted from 600 to 1000 A. D. Among the Apabhramshas one acquired a position of eminence, namely, *Nagara*. The varieties of *Nagara* were used as vehicles of literary expression in the greater part of northern India. But besides *Nagara* and its varieties, there had developed Apabhramshas of the other Prakrits, like *Saurseni*, also.

4. The modern Indian languages or the tertiary Prakrits developed from these Apabhramshas. *Nagara* became the parent of *Rajasthan* and *Gujarati* languages, through a variety to which Tessitori gave the name old Western *Rajasthan*.

Saurseni Apabhramsha is represented in the Prakrit grammar of Hemchandra (d. 1172 A. D.). But it is difficult to determine the relationship of *Saurseni* Apabhramsha with *Nagara*. It seems that the *Saurseni* Apabhramsha underwent a further change, which has been variously called old Western Hindi, *Avahattha*, *Kavyabhasha*.

5. With the arrival upon the scene of this language the stage of secondary Prakrits comes to an end, and the stage of new Indo-Aryan speech begins. The old Western Hindi which is the earliest form of the new midland speech appears to have become established in the eleventh century. From the old Western Hindi branched out Hindustani ('Khari') of the North midland, Braj of the middle region and Bundeli of the southern parts. In the twelfth century they were all spoken dialects. In the course of the following centuries they assumed literary form.

6. From a study of the development of these languages I have arrived at the conclusion that Hindustani ('Khari') was the first to develop into a literary language. We have a continuous history of Hindustani (Deccani Urdu) from the last quarter of the 14th century onwards. On the other hand the history of Braj literature before the 16th century is very doubtful.

7. Let me consider the so-called Braj literature of the pre-16th century.

(a) The first poet who is supposed to have employed Braj (*Pingala*) is Chand Bardai, the author of *Prithviraj Raso*, who is said to have been the contemporary of *Prithviraj* (12th century). Regarding the *Raso* the weight of opinion is that it is a spurious poem. Buhler, Gaurishanker Hirachand Ojha, Grierson and other scholars doubt its genuineness. Its language is a curious mixture of the archaic and the modern, its subject matter contravenes history and its authorship is dubious.

On these grounds Pt. Ram Chandra Shukla came to the conclusion that 'the book is of no use either to the student of language or of history.'

(b) The next author who is claimed as a writer of Braj is Amir Khusru. He died in 1325 A. D. Of his verses, acrostics, double entendre poems in Hindi no authentic manuscript has ever been found. Professor Mahmud Sherani of Lahore has conclusively proved that Khaliq Bari — a dictionary of Hindi and Persian words in verse, attributed to him — cannot possibly be his. The language of his Hindi poems is so modern that even a tiro in philology ought not fail to notice that it cannot belong to the 13th or 14th century. Much of it is simply modern Hindustani or Khari, some bears an impress of Braj. Dr. Hidayat Husain compiled a list of genuine works of Khusru and has not found room for his Hindi poems in it. Some Hindi writers have read an extract from his poem Khizra Khan and Dewal Rani, in which occurs a praise of Hindi. They have concluded from this that Khusru was an admirer and poet of Hindi. But a perusal of the passage leaves no doubt on the mind that he was not referring to Braj or Hindustani. On the basis of such slender evidence to trace the history of Braj to Khusru is not at all scientific.

(c) Then, mention is made of the saints and Bhaktas as writers of Braj poetry, like Namdeva, Raidasa, Dhana, Pipa, Sen, Kabir etc. The Banis and Padas of these are given in the Guru Granth. How far they can be considered genuine is an unsolved problem. Namdev was a Maratha who lived in the 13th century, and whether he wrote in Hindi or not cannot be ascertained, for Guru Granth was compiled in the beginning of the 17th century, nor any authentic manuscripts of the works of others are forthcoming.

Among them Kabir who lived in the 15th century is best known. A large number of his verses are found in the Guru Granth. Their language has a very strong impress of Punjabi. The Nagari Pracharini Sabha has published, under the editorship of Rai Bahadur Shyam Sunder Das, the works of Kabir. They are said to be based on a manuscript of 1504 A. D., but grave doubts have been cast upon the genuineness of this date (vide Dr. P. D. Barathwal's Nirgun school of Hindi poetry). In any case even the language of this edition is like the language of the extracts in Guru Granth, highly Punjabified. Now Kabir himself has stated that he used the Purbi tongue, and there are Kabir's works which show great Rajasthani influence on the language. In these circumstances it is difficult to be certain of the language of Kabir's works. Pandit Ram Chandra Shukla has attempted to solve the problem by saying that Kabir used Sadhukkari for the poems teaching his doctrine (Sikhis) and Kavyabhasha or Braj for his Ramainis and Sabads.

This solution is hardly satisfactory. It contradicts Kabir's own statement. Again in the absence of authentic documents it is not possible to prove it.

8. Thus the more one investigates these literary products the more strongly the conclusion is borne in upon one that the popularly held opinion regarding their language has little basis in fact. Other considerations support this conclusion. It is well known that

no dialect rises to the position and status of a literary language unless a strong social force supports it. This force may be political or religious. Pali and Ardh-Magadhi rose into fame because they became the vehicles of Buddhist and Jaina reformations. Hindustani acquired its literary status as a result of the support of Muslim preachers and rulers. Rajasthani which was the literary language of a great part of northern India during the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries owed its rise and popularity to the greatness of Sisodias of Mewar. When the Moghals overthrew the Ranas of Mewar, Rajasthani shrank into a local language.

Now if we consider Braj, we do not discover any political or religious movement at its back till the 16th century. Braj was not the political centre of any power. Till Vallabhacharya settled in Braj and began his sectarian movement of Krishna Bhakti, Braj had no importance as a religious centre. Vallabha's movement apparently gave the impetus which transformed the spoken dialect into a literary language. Surdas and the other disciples of Vallabha (the Ashtachhapa) established the supremacy of Braj in northern India, with the result that a form of Braj was adopted even in distant Bengal as the medium of expression of Krishna Bhakti.

9. The poems of Kabir and other Bhaktas, whatever their original language, were mainly handed down by word of mouth. When the flood of Braj began to flow they were easily affected and Brajified.

10. My view that Braj has no genuine literature which can be ascribed to centuries before the 16th is based upon considerations which I have summarised above. But I am not the only one who holds these views. Dr. Dharendra Varma, the head of the Hindi department of the Allahabad University, who is emphatically not biased in favour of Hindustani, has given expression to the same view in his history of Hindi language and the grammar of Brajbhasha, to which reference may be made."

Sevagram, 6-6-42

Rajaji

Although I retain the opinion I have expressed about my differences with Rajaji, and although I adhere to every word I have said and he has quoted, and although I reaffirm my opinion that my language taken in its context does not bear the interpretation Rajaji puts upon it, I do not propose henceforth to enter into any public controversy with him. I join him in hoping that some day I shall see the error of my views which he sees so clearly. But public controversy with close companions like Rajaji repels me. He has a new mission and he has need to speak.

Sevagram, 7-6-42

M. K. G.

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Key *See on the*
Differences Very Real

HARIJAN

Editor: MAHADEV DESAI

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AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 1942

[FIVE PICE

Notes

A Triple Tragedy

The *National Herald* is an institution. It has a directorate which has no personal or financial interest in it. It is founded by Jawaharlal Nehru. It is only in India that the security of such a paper can be forfeited. In fact why any security at all from it? And they need the greatest assistance possible from him in the war effort. They have exploited his stray sayings torn from their context. In any case, what do the Government expect from their repressive policy? Consider this forfeiture of security in conjunction with the arrest and detention of Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, ex-Minister, the organiser of the Congress in U. P. and a Director of the *National Herald*. Put these two acts side by side with the wanton and almost indecent search of the A. I. C. C. Office. And the tragedy is complete. This triple act is in my opinion a great hindrance to national war effort. It is so mad as to amount to an invitation to the Japanese to walk into India. It is a justification for my friendly invitation to the foreign Government to abdicate in favour of the nation whatever it may be. It is bold, it is hazardous. The British are capable of taking risks such as very few are. Let them take the risk I have suggested and it will be their greatest war effort. It alone can save the situation, if anything can, so far as India is concerned. As a first step let them revoke the forfeiture order, discharge Rafi Saheb, and return the papers seized from the A. I. C. C.

Sevagram, 29-5-42

Jodhpur

From Jodhpur comes the news that Shri Jainarayan Vyas has been arrested for daring to seek an interview with the Maharaja and for proposing to carry on the movement for responsible government in Jodhpur.

Evidently Shri Jainarayan Vyas had no other choice. I wish the Jodhpur workers all success. But I hope they have realised that they have to plough the lonely furrow. They will have abundant sympathy from all over India, but dry sympathy will give them no help. Help must come from their own resolute will and unflinching courage.

Sevagram, 30-5-42

Sardar Prithvisingh

I am sorry that after association with me since his discovering himself and allowing himself to be arrested, Sardar Prithvisingh has parted company with me, having lost all faith in me all of a sudden

and as a result of a single talk with me. This naturally led him to tender his resignation from the Ahimsaka Vyayam Sangh. As a natural corollary to this step, the trustees of the Sangh have decided to wind up the Sangh and close the Vyayam Shala, which was established by the Sangh, purely to let him make experiment and find out, under my guidance, the scope and quality of non-violent Vyayam. I am hoping that, though he has lost faith in me, he has not lost it in *ahimsa* to which he was led after close and careful self-examination during years of secrecy.

Sevagram, 29-5-42

M. K. G.

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Q. "Is it a fact that your present attitude towards England and Japan is influenced by the belief that you think the British and the allies are going to be defeated in this War? It is necessary that you clear the position in this respect. A very important leader in the Congress thinks like that and he says that he is sure because he has this knowledge from his personal talks with you."

A. I wish you could have given the name of the leader. Whoever he is, I have no hesitation in saying that it is not true. On the contrary I said only the other day in *Harijan* that the Britisher was hard to beat. He has not known what it is to be defeated. Of the Americans in this very issue you will see my answer to *The Sunday Despatch*. It contradicts the "leader's" statements. He has therefore either misunderstood me or you have misunderstood him. But I have said in my talk for the past twelve months and more that this war is not likely to end in a decisive victory for any party. There will be peace when the exhaustion point is reached. This is mere speculation. Britain may be favoured by nature. She has nothing to lose by waiting. And with America as her ally she has inexhaustible material resources and scientific skill. This advantage is not available to any of the Axis powers. Thus I have no decisive opinion about the result of the War. But what is decisive with me is that I am made by nature to side with weak parties. My policy of non-embarassment is based upon that nature and it persists. My proposal for British withdrawal is as much in the Britain's interest as India's. Your difficulty arises from your disinclination to believe that Britain can ever do justice voluntarily. My belief in the capacity of non-violence rejects the theory of permanent inelasticity of human nature.

Sevagram, 30-5-42

A REMINISCENE OF C. F. A.

The five lakhs for the Deenabandhu Memorial could not have been made up in a week but for the generous response of some of the wealthy friends in Bombay. But it must not be forgotten that these include the meagre contributions of the poor — some of whom cherish the memory of the Deenabandhu who worked for them in Fiji, New Zealand and South Africa. A number of people from a village — Karadi Matwad — in Surat District have sent a sum of Rs. 131-4-0 by M. O., made up of small contributions. Some of these, I am told actually knew C. F. A. in New Zealand, and in gladly giving their contributions they said that was the least they could do. Very little is known of C. F. A.'s arduous work in these distant lands. "His activities on behalf of suffering humanity were so extraordinarily varied," says Mr. Hoyland in his memoir, that "the details of them have been forgotten even by himself." But a friend who worked with him in Fiji has a vivid memory of the trips and sends a record which is worth preserving. The system of indenture was a kind of extension of the slavery system for over eighty years after slavery had been nominally abolished, and C. F. A. was one of those whose souls rebelled against the iniquity, immorality and inhumanity of that tyranny. Just as C. F. A. made up his mind as early as 1928 that the British rule in India must be ended and India should be made independent, even so he decided that the indenture system admitted of no improvement, and it must be abolished root and branch. With this end in view he made several pilgrimages to Fiji, incurred the wrath of the owners of sugar companies and the authorities, both of whom worked in an unholy alliance of exploitation and oppression of the poor labourers who went there not knowing what awaited them. All that the sugar companies were concerned about was cheap labour. Before the curse was abolished it was necessary that there should be some education among them. The Deenabandhu's first visit was on a commission of inquiry. The second visit he made on his own, determined that some proper arrangement should be made for the education of the children of the labourers, if Government or the Sugar Company would do nothing in that behalf. His visit was misunderstood and misrepresented. Some tried to make out that he had come to organise a strike and revolt of labour against the Company. He arrived at Lautoka, visited Indians in their cottages and various settlements, and within a week selected three centres — Nadi, Sabeto and Karavi — all on the northern side of the Island where only Christian Mission Schools under the supervision of Europeans existed. He decided that the schools should be in charge of Indians, and education to be given them should be such as would enable them to maintain contact with the land of their birth and their culture. He had to select for this teachers from ex-government interpreters who were then the only educated Indians available as teachers. Shri N. G. Mukerji was appointed in charge of

Sabeto School and Shri S. C. Mitter in charge of Nadi School. Both these men, our correspondent says, had come to Fiji under contract to serve as clerks and interpreters but both resigned. The third school could not be organised. Before any thing could be done, he received a confidential message that if he did not leave Fiji in dignity he would be expelled. An Indian merchant helped him in booking a passage for Sydney and he sailed without a word to the public. His visit was not appreciated by the Australian overseers in the employ of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, a district commissioner had asked his own Indian clerks to spy the Deenabandhu's movements, and an urgent meeting of the Legislative Assembly was called to bring into force a law for deporting undesirable persons from the colony. A warrant had been issued deporting him from Fiji as he was an agitator interfering with labour, but before the warrant could be served on him he had sailed for Sydney. On arrival in Australia he delivered his famous lectures. If he really wanted to make trouble and add to the discontent there he would have stayed in spite of the warrant and disobeyed it. But he was moderate to a degree, and he carried his ministry of conciliation to the extreme limit.

Sevagram, 24-5-42

M. D.

HARIJANS AND SAVARNAS

As usual there are good and bad items to note in connection with Harijan work. There has been plenty of agitation regarding temple-entry for Harijans in Maharashtra. The Kala Rama Temple in Nasik which was the centre of this agitation is not yet open to the Harijans, nor even the famous temple at Pandharpur where thousands of Harijans go from everywhere and have 'darshan' from a distance. But slowly and silently reform is progressing, and on the 7th of May, 1942, Her Highness the Dowager Maharani Saheba of Kolhapur threw open a newly built temple to the Harijans at Khatgun, a village in Satara District. The village has only a population of 1500, and may be thus regarded as insignificant. But the importance of the event lies in the fact that the inhabitants themselves collected about Rs. 10,000, built the Shri Ram Temple, and in the teeth of the opposition of a few sanatanists had this opened by the Maharani. The Chief of Aundh with his son Appasaheb, Shri Satvalekar, Kakasaheb Barwe, Shri Pandurang Patil and others interested in Harijan welfare and in the uplift and purification of Hinduism were present at the ceremony. The village people made all the arrangements for the reception of the guests and for the huge meeting which was attended by about 10000 people including Harijans from neighbouring villages, and for a *bhajan* party in the *sabha-mandapa* of the temple, in which also Harijans took part.

There was, as I have mentioned above, a certain amount of opposition and those who sponsored it tried to scare away the Harijans without much success. But it is now the duty of the reformers who outnumber the orthodox to disarm their

opposition, and to win them over by patient persuasion, service, and work among the Harijans.

There is some glad news from Gujarat too. In the Kaira district the District Board has had to close some schools because Harijan children would not be admitted to the schools, and it has been a regular tussle between the orthodox and the workers. News now comes of a village Govindpura — where the Harijan Sevak Sangh has opened a school because there was none, and where the Baraiyas who are generally illiterate and superstitious gladly cooperated by sending their children to the school. The teacher is a Harijan, and the Baraiya children and Harijan children now learn sitting side by side in the school. The school has no building of its own. The inhabitants agreed to build one themselves, the Harijans undertaking to build the mud walls and the Savarna Hindus undertaking to build the rest. Foundation of the school was laid on the 20th of May. Harijans were invited to take part in the ceremony, and *prasad* was distributed to all including the Harijans and the Harijan priest was garlanded by the Savarnas.

Both the incidents are quite commendable. But when one thinks of the work still to be done one is filled with despair. No major State has yet followed the example of Travancore. Mysore which had in the late Maharaja a ruler noted for his piety and devotional temperament will not yet open its temples to the Harijans. Some of the best known of our shrines are still notorious for their having kept their gods untouchable and unseeable for the Harijans. The orthodox Patidars in some of the villages in Kaira district will not listen to reason and would rather let their children go without education than let them sit side by side with Harijan children in schools. Harijans in the Garhwal district and in parts of Rajputana are not suffered to celebrate their marriages and have marriage processions as any other Hindus can do.

As I am writing this comes a tale of woe from Gujarat.

"On the morning of May 13," says a newspaper report, "a Harijan went to take tea at a Muslim hotel, but as no one was in the hotel, he went to another hotel. When the owner of the first hotel learnt about this, it is alleged, he beat the Harijan mercilessly. Then at about 8 A. M. some Muslims went to the locality of the Harijans and, it is alleged, beat them mercilessly." This if true is a case of Muslims following the Hindus slavishly in their superstitions, and we have none but ourselves to blame for it. Only the other day in a public hotel situated in the compound of a police court in Nagpur district, an educated young man, the son of an ex-M. L. C., who had gone to the court on government work was belaboured by the men in the hotel. He reported the matter to the police, but the owner of the hotel, a government licensee, reported the matter to the Tahsildar who ordered the young man to pay Rs. 5 to the hotel-keeper by way of compensation as he had polluted the hotel!

And may I mention here the scandal of the crematorium at Vile Parle? To exclude dead

Harijans from a crematorium is a much worse sin than to exclude living ones from a hotel. Death ends all hates and should obviously end the hate that there is at the bottom of untouchability. When one thinks of these very dark spots, it becomes difficult to enthuse over the bright ones I have mentioned in this note.

Sevagram, 24-5-42

M. D.

ANTI-BRITISH FEELING

When a man like Kunwar Sir Jagadish Prasad asserts that there is plenty of anti-British feeling among the Indian public, he would not say so lightly, and without good reasons. A correspondent has sent a number of cuttings containing statements by responsible people about racial discrimination against the Indian evacuees from the Malay Peninsula, Singapore and Burma, and the Marwari Relief Society's report has just been published in the newspapers. The correspondent, a highly educated person, asks :

" Apart from non-violence, why talk of cooperation on any terms, in face of insults such as these? Why have to choose the first robber instead of the second who is trying to rob the first? Why choose at all? I am inclined to believe that so long as England is here, there shall be racial discrimination in all its worst forms. Such things bring out the worst in one. Hate is the predominant feeling."

Another correspondent who happened to interview a high placed Indian official with regard to the behaviour of the soldiers sends a report of the talk he had with this official:

"With regard to the question of compensation, he told me that the government were not responsible for the deeds and misdeeds of their servants when off duty, and therefore the question of compensating the victims of the assaults did not arise. I asked him to let me have his answer in writing, particularly his views with regard to compensation and action that the government were taking to check such ugly happenings. But he refused to give me anything in writing and told me that he was not obliged to answer my letter. He even went the length of telling me that agitators were making capital out of such incidents and he tried to compare conditions in this country with conditions in Great Britain where all these tommies were befriended by the people and specially young girls in the streets and cafes in towns and villages of England. He even regretted that the ungrateful people of this country were not providing all the fun and facilities for the soldiers who have come all the way from England to defend and protect our country."

It is things like these that sink and spread the anti-British feeling. If the British withdraw voluntarily, and withdrew their soldiers too who suffer from want of fun and frolic here, this anti-British feeling would vanish and give place to a genuine feeling of friendliness.

Sevagram, 29-5-42

M. D.

Christian Missions

Their Place in India

By Gandhiji

Pages 311. Price Rs. 2. Postage etc. As. 5 extra

HARIJAN

June 7

1942

DIFFERENCES VERY REAL

(By M. K Gandhi)

"Your latest advice to the British to withdraw from all Asiatic possessions or at least India is in accord with a general but undefined wish of a good section of the Indian public. Rightly or wrongly that wish is based upon the feeling that but for the Britisher making India the arsenal of his fight against the Axis, Japan may not have good cause for attacking India and will not do so. Even supposing Britain were to accede to this position, you do not suppose that Japan will on no account attack us. Very probably they may, and I am sure they will if only to get control of the vast material resources we have and use the same against their enemy. In which event you have advised non-violent resistance by us, but the Britisher will still carry the war against his enemy into our country (as is now done over the air in Burma, Siam, Indo-China, and occupied Europe) dictated, so they will say, solely by military considerations. None of these troubles may arise if the belligerents accept your method of settling disputes. But I see no near prospect of it nor do you. Meanwhile we may still have war in our midst each side saying that it is absolutely necessary to prevent the other from getting support for his operations. The resultant suffering will be ours and even if we hold on non-violently against the invader, it will not prevent the erstwhile possessor, from showering death and destruction on account of the enemy but all in our land and exactly over our heads. Perhaps Rajaji's attempt to organise a nation-wide resistance to the invader even at the cost of cooperating with the British arms is aimed at avoiding this futility of suffering. Even his method involves suffering, but is it not likely to be accepted more readily and with enthusiasm as being connected with the sole desire for preserving freedom and independence from aggression? It may also be that he feels that during and by that actual operation of mutual cooperation there may arise on our side a greater strength to achieve our independence and on their side a real appreciation of that strength and induce a feeling that it would serve no purpose to refuse the Indian demand any longer. . . . I should entreat you to let me know if I am correct in the above analysis and if so it does not reveal a fundamental difference between you and Rajaji in this critical hour of our history. In which event, you alone can show us the good and real way out, without futile suffering."

This is a very cogent letter from a friend who is most anxious to bridge the political gulf between Rajaji and me. But it cannot be by any make-believe. On the contrary any make-believe will mislead the country and serve neither his immediate purpose nor mine. We love the country with an equal passion. But our modes of service for the time being are diametrically opposite. He

believes in resisting the threatened Japanese attack with the British aid. I regard this as impossible in the long end. India is not the home of the British people. If they are overwhelmed they will retire from India every man and woman and child, if they have facilities enough to carry them, even as they retired from Singapore, Malaya and Rangoon. This is no reflection on them or their bravery. Every army would have done likewise. But most probably from India they will not take with them the Indian army. They will perhaps expect them to carry on the battle by themselves. No doubt they would try to harrass the Japanese army if they can from outside. So there would be no difference in the position imagined by my correspondent and what I have adumbrated. Only under my plan what is contemplated is an orderly withdrawal by the British as if it was a premeditated military movement which will, let us assume, please millions of Indians. Then the hated British will become esteemed friends and allies. They will operate in concert with their allies the Indians even as they would, say, with the Chinese. The whole thing becomes natural and a mighty force is voluntarily available to the British and to us. Add to this the moral height which Britain will occupy.

As for communal unity, the third party being removed unity will follow as day follows night. Unity will not precede but will succeed freedom. Today we do not even know that the goal of the Congress and the League is one. And you cannot bribe the League to cooperate for independence. Either the League believes that India is as much the home of Muslims as of non-Muslims, or it does not. If it does, it must first free the home from bondage before partitioning it. To-day there is nothing to partition. After ridding the home of the foreign occupant, it can demand partition if it wishes and get it by negotiation or force. However, if it does not believe in India being the home of the Muslims, there is no question of negotiations for freeing India from bondage.

Rajaji's plan is, in my opinion, wholly unnatural. He wants to thrust himself on the British power which does not want him, for as the possessor by right of conquest it gets all it wants. In order to thrust himself on the British he gives the League the right of self-determination which every single individual has whether the others recognise it or not. Rajaji does not like partition and hugs the belief that his superfluous recognition of the inherent right will enable him to avoid partition.

I advise my correspondent not to worry over our differences. We know and love each other enough to let time correct the error, whether it lies on my side or his. Meanwhile a frank and bold admission of differences and their exact nature makes for healthy education of public opinion. What is needed is avoidance of anger and intolerance, the twin enemies of correct understanding.

Sevagram, 29-5-42

UNFAIR TO AMERICA ?

Proceeding evidently on Reuters' summary of Gandhiji's statement about America during the interview he gave to the Bombay press, The *Sunday Dispatch* of London sent Gandhiji the following cable :

• " You are reported as saying that America could have kept out of the war if she had wished. How can you justify such a statement in view of the fact that while at peace America was attacked by the Japanese who simultaneously declared war on her."

To this Gandhiji sent the following reply :

" Cable just received. Evidently you have not my full statement. Part relating to America runs thus : ' I know that I have no right to criticise such a big nation. I don't know all the facts which have determined America to throw herself into the cauldron. But somehow or other opinion has forced itself on me that America could have remained out and even now she can do so if she divests herself of intoxication that her immense wealth has produced. And here I would like to repeat what I have said about the withdrawal of the British power from India. Both America and Britain lack the moral basis for engaging in this war unless they put their own houses in order by making it their fixed determination to withdraw their influence and power both from Africa and Asia and removed the colour bar. They have no right to talk of protecting democracy and protecting civilisation and human freedom until the canker of white superiority is destroyed in its entirety.' I adhere to that statement. How America could have avoided war I cannot answer except by recommending non-violent method. My American friendships had led me to build high hope on American contribution to peace. America is too big financially, intellectually, and in scientific skill, to be subdued by any nation or even combination. Hence my tears over her throwing herself in cauldron."

In war it is not always the first act of aggression that determines the causes of the war. That act becomes the occasion, but it is always the result of a series of events preceding it. The murder of the Austrian Crown Prince at Serajevo was but the matchstick that exploded the powder magazine in 1914, but the powder magazine had been getting ready for years before the war. The first act of aggression in America's war with Japan was certainly Japan's, but was that the cause? Rev. John Haynes Holmes who tendered his resignation as pastor of the community church in New York in December last, because he could not use his ministry "to bless, sanction, or support war", said in the course of his last sermon announcing his resignation : "The American people were not guiltless in a war which was the final outrage to the will of God . . . We have our share of guilt in this disaster. Ours is a war world, to which we have consented and in which we have participated, and this is what happens in such a world."

Evidently Rev. Holmes had better data before him than Gandhiji and so he had no hesitation in proclaiming to the world America's guilt.

Sevagram, 29-5-42

M. D.

ALCHEMY OF PRODUCING FOOD

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Below will be found an extract from a letter of the Hon. Secretary of Marwari Relief Society Social Service Department :

" We are on the threshold of an acute food shortage crisis today. A good deal is being heard of the "grow more food" campaign, and it is no doubt a move in the right direction. But in my humble opinion, our leaders have not given due consideration to one considerable potential source of food supply in our country, which if successfully tapped, would feed at least 50 lakhs of our starving fellow-men. I refer the tremendous waste of food that every one of us in this country indulges in, when taking our meals morning and evening and also the disgraceful waste that is usually seen on festive occasions. The aggregate amount thus thrown into the dustbins could easily keep 5 millions of our countrymen from a perpetual state of semi-starvation. While passing along the streets of Calcutta, I have been shocked to find my own brothers and sisters picking up rotten food from the dustbins and eating it. The thought of such a ghastly scene which can be described as nothing short of a national disgrace has haunted me day and night and I have felt ashamed to take my food at home."

The Secretary further asks me to suggest ways and means of organising a campaign popularising the plan suggested in the letter. The plan I can heartily recommend. All the belligerent countries have been forced to cut off food supplies all round. There is naturally therefore not much scope for wastage in these countries. In our country seemingly we are not reduced to the straits to which the belligerent countries are reduced. In reality, however, the wastage which is truly enormous is confined to the few within the cities. The millions are living in a state of perpetual semi-starvation. For them it is like living in a chronic state of war. Day in and day out they know not what a square meal is. For them who have no margin the pressure of the present war can better be imagined than described.

What the Secretary suggests is worthy of consideration. A campaign against waste can be easily organised in all the cities. No householder should be without the knowledge of how he or she can avoid waste. There is here no question of denial. The question is only one of consideration for the poor. All saving thus made will be equal to so much food production without effort. There will have to be literature on the subject. It should not be elaborate. Leaflets should suffice. They must not be argumentative. By facts and figures they should tell the citizens how much waste they are responsible for and how they can avoid it. The horrible superstition that the dishes of the rich should always be over-full so as to leave an ample margin for leavings should be banished forthwith. It should be considered a sign of bad breeding to leave one's plate with a heap of uneaten things, whether at home or in a hotel. One should regulate the helpings with strict regard to wants. If all who are given to the evil habit of having plates piled

up and merely sampling the courses served out were to follow the healthy rule here recommended much food can be saved for distribution among those who are in daily want. I think the Marwari Relief Society which has had rich and varied experience in social service is perhaps the fittest body to take the initiative in organising the work. Though the problem will be much the same in all the cities, with every city there will be variations according to people's habits. I suggest, therefore, that the work is begun in Calcutta. The experience gained there could be utilised in extending the scope of service. It ought not to take more than a week to organise the work in Calcutta. Naturally great concentration of energy and a large body of willing workers will be required for this essential and urgent service.

Sevagram, 30-5-42

TOWARDS DESTRUCTION

An innocuous little note on how common folk can do uncommon things has brought to me a sheaf of letters. A correspondent—a student—is profusely thankful that I wrote that note for it has helped him in giving up tobacco. Others have written angrily citing instances of leaders who set a bad example to the public. They forget that I was primarily concerned with citing an instance of an ordinary man having overcome a harmful habit, and not with instances of those who had tried and failed. I would now like to drive the lesson further home by citing two or three instances of well-known men who gave up the habit in the twinkling of an eye. The late Deenabandhu Andrews was one; Mr. Hermann Kallenbach, of Johannesburg, is another; and nearer home is the shining example of Sardar Vallabhbjai. He was once a chain smoker, and used to consume a tin of 50 every day. He began reducing the number until he refrained from smoking in public or in the presence of people. One fine morning in March 1930 he was arrested at Kaira, and was being taken by the police chief to Sabarmati Jail. The Chief was friendly and offered him a cigarette. The Sardar politely declined and said: "Of course you offer it as you know I smoke. But I smoke no more." Boxes of cigars and cigarettes sent by friends through the Superintendent of the Jail were returned. And he has not touched tobacco since.

All that is needed is the knowledge that it is a destructive habit and the will to give it up. If any more evidence is needed on the destructive quality of the drug, here is the testimony of Havelock Ellis, the scientist, sent me by a correspondent:

"Another such ambivalent test is the consumption of luxuries of which alcohol and tobacco are the types. There is held to be no surer test of civilisation than the increase per head of the consumption of alcohol and tobacco. Yet alcohol and tobacco are recognisably poisons, so that their consumption has only to be carried far enough to destroy civilisation altogether."

Sevagram, 29-5-42

M. D.

A RURAL ANTHOLOGY

II

At Tedderfield and Newby we were hardly 40 miles from the Anglo-Scottish border. But we must now proceed farther afield and observe the rural scene in the extreme north of Scotland. Here, as we are informed by Mr. Russell Montague Garnier, in the *Annals of the British Peasantry*, the labourer had no necessity to spend his money on clothes as long as he possessed a wife and a few sheep.

"He did not even require money for procuring the machinery for manufacturing his clothing. Any fellow with moderate dexterity could cut what he wanted out of the nearest wood. In Eden's days the ancient beart or loom was still used for the weaving of broad gaiters and belts... The cuigel or distaff... could be worked from an elbow chair or low stool, by mere children... He had encountered old women in his walks abroad, spindle in hand, distaff in girdle, proving to his delight that

'Still froe the russet lap the spindle plays.'

"Many a shepherd and cotter, with wife and children, appeared at kirk 'neat, tidy and even fine', in clothes which, from the time the stuff of which they were made was sown in the flax ground, shorn from the sheep or cut from the cow's hide, had been touched by no hand but their own.

".....A seaped shirt was washed with soap home made, generally of hog's dung; other garments with chamber ley. I doubt if in many parts where wages were still paid in kind, a coin was ever exchanged the whole year through for any necessary of life.

"Every Highland peasant made out of his home-tanned leather, shoes of astonishing elegance and strength, sewn by himself with thongs of calf skin.

"I will end it [this chapter] by showing how easily the Highland housewife dispensed with most of these so-called resources of civilization. Except the awl, needle, thimble, dyeing cauldron and a few bits of iron work for the weaving shed, all implements and materials were manufactured on the spot. Trees, shrubs and herbs furnished the various ingredients of the dye pot and every want in life was supplied with those hands and feet which the English statute book some three centuries earlier had preferred to all the cunning contrivances of machinery. Truly there was a modicum of method in the madness of that machinery destroyer, Ned Ludd and his poor deluded followers after all—only they, unlike most reformers, had come into the world a few centuries too late.

"Even at the present time we can, if we journey up into the Highlands, see the cottage factory still in its perfection. Only the other day I asked my boatman in the Cromarty firth if anything he wore was of home manufacture, and he astonished me when he replied that his blue tweed suit, cap, shirt, stockings and boots were all made during the silent night watches by himself and his dexterous spouse." (The italics are mine.)

(To be continued)

V. G. D.

The Indian States' Problem
By Gandhiji
687 Pages, Price Rs. 4. Postage 10 As. extra.

FREE INDIA CAN HELP BEST

Answering to the question of a press correspondent whether his present policy as revealed by his writings did not vitiate his own declaration that he was a friend of China, Gandhiji said: "My answer is an emphatic 'no'."

"I remain the passionate friend of China that I have always claimed to be. I know what loss of freedom means. Therefore, I could not but be in sympathy with China which is my next-door neighbour in distress. And, if I believed in violence and if I could influence India, I would put in motion every force at my command on behalf of China to save her liberty. In making, therefore, the suggestion which I have made about withdrawal of British power, I have not lost sight of China. But because I have China in mind, I feel that the only effective way for India to help China is to persuade Great Britain to free India and let a free India make her full contribution to the war effort. Instead of being sullen and discontented, India free will be a mighty force for the good of mankind in general. It is true that the solution I have presented is a heroic solution beyond the ken of Englishmen. But being a true friend of Britain and China and Russia, I must not suppress the solution which I believe to be eminently practical and probably the only one in order to save the situation and in order to convert the war into a power for good instead of being what it is, a peril to humanity."

"I am Not Pro-Japanese"

"Pandit Nehru told me yesterday that he heard people in Lahore and Delhi saying that I have turned pro-Japanese. I could only laugh at the suggestion, for, if I am sincere in my passion for freedom, I could not consciously or unconsciously take a step which will involve India in the position of merely changing masters. If, in spite of my resistance to the Japanese menace with my whole soul, the mishap occurs, of which I have never denied the possibility, then the blame would rest wholly on British shoulders. I have no shadow of doubt about it. I have made no suggestion which, even from the military standpoint, is fraught with the slightest danger to British power or to Chinese. It is obvious that India is not allowed to pull her weight in favour of China. If British power is withdrawn from India in an orderly manner, Britain will be relieved of the burden of keeping the peace in India and at the same time gain in a free India an ally not in the cause of Empire—because she would have renounced in toto all her imperial designs, but in a defence, not pretended but wholly real, of human freedom. That I assert and that only is the burden of my recent writings and I shall continue to do so long as I am allowed by the British power."

No Secrecy

"Now what about your plan; you are reported to have matured plans for launching some big offensive?" was the next question. Gandhiji replied: "Well, I have never believed in secrecy

nor do I do so now. There are certainly many plans floating in my brain. But just now I merely allow them to float in my brain. My first task is to educate the public mind in India and world opinion, in so far as I am allowed to do so. And when I have finished that process to my satisfaction, I may have to do something. That something may be very big, if the Congress is with me and the people are with me. But British authority will have a full knowledge of anything I may wish to do before I enforce it. Remember I have yet to see the Maulana Sahib. My talks with Pandit Nehru are yet unfinished. I may say that they were wholly of a friendly nature and we have come nearer to each other even with the unfinished talk of yesterday. Naturally I want to carry the whole of the Congress with me if I can, as I want to carry the whole of India with me. For my conception of freedom is no narrow conception. It is co-extensive with the freedom of man in all his majesty. I shall, therefore, take no step without the fullest deliberation."

TO RESIST SLAVE DRIVERS

The Rashtriya Yuvak Sangha of the C. P. Province have been having their annual in Wardha for some time. They are to finish it on 30th. They were anxious to have Gandhiji in their midst, even if it was for a few minutes. He therefore invited them to come to Sevagram. And a hundred of them walked four miles to have a talk with him at 6-15 in the morning. Gandhiji gave them a little over half an hour. The talk was in Hindustani. The following is the substance of the talk. It was in the nature of questions and answers.

"How are we to help in driving away the British from here?" was the first question that was asked.

"We don't want to drive away the British people from here. It is the British rulers whom we are asking quietly to withdraw. It is the British domination that we want to vanish from our land. We have no quarrel with the Englishmen, many of whom are my friends, but we want the rule to end altogether, for that is the poison that corrupts all it touches, that is the obstacle that stops all progress."

"And what is needed for this are two things—the knowledge that the domination is a greater evil than any other evil that we can think of, and that we have to get rid of it no matter what it may cost. The knowledge is so necessary because the British exercise their power and domination in all kinds of subtle and insidious ways that it is sometimes difficult to know that we are bound hand and foot. Next is the will to throw off the chains. We have simply to cultivate the will not to do the rulers' bidding. Is it very difficult? How can one be compelled to accept slavery? I simply refuse to do the master's bidding. He may torture me, break my bones to atoms, and even kill me. He will then have my dead body, not my obedience. Ultimately, therefore, it is I who am the victor and not he, for he has failed in getting me to do what he wanted done."

"That is what I am trying to impress both on those whom I want to retire and those who are bound in their chains. I am going to use all my powers to do so, but not violence—simply because I have no faith in it.

"Two forces of the same type are ranged against each other in the present war. We do not know what will be the upshot. At the present moment, the upshot is mutual destruction of life and property, and destruction not alone of the combatants but of innocent non-combatants. I do not want for our country this power of destruction that we find having full play. I do not want the power of a Hitler, I want the power of a free peasant. I have been trying to identify myself with the peasants all these years, but have not yet succeeded in doing so. What however differentiates me from the kisan today is that he is a *kisan* and a *labourer* not by choice but by force of circumstances. I want to be a *kisan* and a labourer by choice and when I can make him also a *kisan* and a labourer by choice, I can also enable him to throw off the shackles that keep him bound today and that compel him to do the master's bidding.

"For you to achieve identification with them, you have of course got to be able-bodied—not athletes like Sandow, but able to do all the body-labour that comes the peasant's way during his day's work. A Sandow may have a beautiful physique, but may not be able to carry a headload from here to Wardha in the heat of the sun—which a peasant here can do. We want a physical frame that can endure the sun and the rain and can stand any amount of labour. We want also the will to resist. We want to build up the muscles of the body, but we also want to build up the muscles of the will and the intellect.

"For that will enable us to do our part in the fight that is in front of us. But I am going to be patient, I am not going to hurry or hustle you. I am busy preparing the atmosphere, and whatever I will do I shall do having in view the limitations of our people. I know that neither the rulers nor public opinion understand the implications of my proposal."

"But", asked a friend, "have we not to see that the remedy may not be worse than the disease? There will be, in the course of the resistance, in spite of all our will to prevent them, clashes and resultant anarchy. May not that anarchy be worse than the present anarchy which you have called ordered anarchy?"

"That is a very proper question. That is the consideration that has weighed with me all these 22 years. I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has now undergone a change. I feel that I cannot afford to wait. If I continue to wait I might have to wait till doomsday. For the preparation that I have prayed for and worked for may never come, and

in the meantime I may be enveloped and overwhelmed by the flames that threaten all of us. That is why I have decided that even at certain risks which are obviously involved I must ask the people to resist the slavery. But even that readiness, let me assure you, depends on the non-violent man's unflinching faith. All I am conscious of is that there is not a trace of violence in the remotest corner of my being, and my conscious pursuit of *ahimsa* for the last 50 years cannot possibly fail me at this crisis. The people have not my *ahimsa*, but mine should help them. There is ordered anarchy around and about us. I am sure that the anarchy that may result because of the British withdrawal or their refusal to listen to us and our decision to defy their authority will in no way be worse than the present anarchy. After all, those who are unarmed cannot produce a frightful amount of violence or anarchy, and I have a faith that out of that anarchy may arise pure non-violence. But to be passive witness of the terrible violence that is going on, of the terrible anarchy that is going on in the name of resisting a possible foreign aggression, is a thing I cannot stand. It is a thing that would make me ashamed of my *ahimsa*. It is made of sterner stuff.

"I know that what I am saying today is not easy to understand. Language is but a poor vehicle of one's thoughts. What I have said is bound to suffer from the limitations of that vehicle. But I want you to ponder coolly over what I have been saying and writing, and perhaps you will be able to understand me. I am also sure that those who cannot or will not understand me will do so in the light of experience, i. e. if they survive the present catastrophe."

Sevagram, 28-5-42

M. D.

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